COLONIAL TIMES

ON

BUZZARD'S BAY

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Colonial Times on Buzzard's Bay

by

William Root Bliss

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The Riverside Press, Cambridge, Mass., U. S. A.
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I Dedicate this Book

TO MY WIFE,

ELIZABETH FEARING,

ONE OF THE GREAT-GREAT-GRANDDAUGHTERS OF

ISRAEL FEARING, Esquire,

OF THE AGAWAME PLANTATION, WHO WAS A GRANDSON OF

JOHN FEARING,

OF NORFOLK COUNTY IN OLD ENGLAND,

WHO LANDED AT HINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS,

IN THE YEAR 1635.

In preparing this book I have used the following original manuscripts; namely — the Records of the Rochester Propriety, beginning in the year 1679; the Records of the Agawame Plantation, beginning in the year 1685; the Records of Rochestertown, beginning in the year 1694; the Records of Wareham, town and church, beginning in the year 1739, the diary and account book of Israel Fearing, farmer and justice of the peace from 1720 to 1754, and similar writings by his son John and his grandson John, farmers and justices of the peace under the royal government and under the independent commonwealth; also various old manuscripts belonging to Mr. Gerard C. Tobey of Wareham. Studying these writings, I have tried to illumine their skeleton sketches of men and events with the color and spirit of their times.

William Root Bliss

Greystones, Short Hills,
Essex County, New Jersey.

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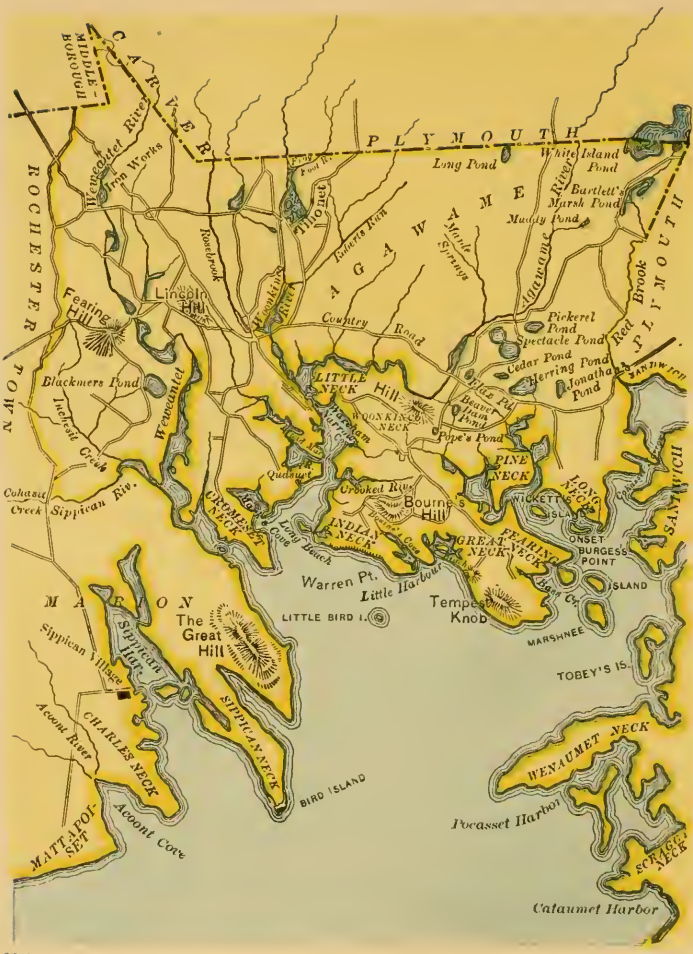

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THE UPPER SHORE OF BUZZARDS BAY.

A PRELUDE

THE story told in this book begins in the year 1680, when a few Englishmen of the Plymouth colony made a plantation near Sippican harbor on the upper shore of Buzzard's Bay; and it ends in the year when a railroad, creeping down from Boston, entered the same region and changed the morals, manners, and occupations of its inhabitants.

These planters belonged to the class which Governor Bradford described as "used to a plaine countrie life and ye innocente trade of husbandrie;" in pursuit of this trade they came to seek richer pastures than were to be found on the Plymouth shore. When they laid out their new homesteads, allotting to each associate sections of woodland, salt meadow, cedar swamp, and sea beach, they provided for certain future necessities by reserving lands "for the yuse of the ministrie," for a grist-mill, a saw-mill, a fishing

station, and one lonesome acre for a burying place.

> "The dreariest spot in all the land
> To death they set apart,
> With scanty grace from nature's hand
> And none from that of art."

The solitude of the situation and its remoteness from English settlements forced them to rely upon their own resources. They wove flax and sheep's wool into materials for clothing; they made and shared in use the plows and tools needed in their methods of agriculture; they cut firewood in a common forest and grazed cattle in common pastures; they built sloops for freighting and fishing, and traded with each other by "truck and dicker." Their records show that they had no religious bigotry, no enmity to Quakers, no belief in witchcraft, no enthusiasm for public schools, no disloyalty to the king.

In the course of time, families expanded around the homesteads and formed small isolated villages. Before them was the open bay; behind them was a primeval forest stretching away for miles and miles, offering no lines of travel except the meandering

paths trodden out by Indians on their journeys to the shore for shell-fish, or by herds of deer going to and from the watering places. At the outset this forest was esteemed as a valuable inheritance. From its pine knots tar was made in restricted quantities and sent to the West Indies, to be bartered for such tropical products as were needed at home; and lest a time might come when the inheritance would be in ruins because of a wasteful felling of its pine, oak, and spruce trees, it was decreed that no timber of any sort shall be carried away; that no man shall cut posts, rails, or house-frames except for his own use; and every boat's load of white cedar brought to the landing for shipment abroad shall pay an export tax in money. Their principle of political economy was the "protection" of future values. To this action the upper shore of Buzzard's Bay owes its picturesque woodlands; while the highlands of Cape Cod, not far away, are barren of trees, although they were once covered by a dense forest.

Circumstances disciplined these people to habits of severe frugality. It was their

custom to record all barters with each other and all bargains for labor, and to make the final reckoning in presence of debtor and creditor, each of whom searched the record for errors. If one was found, as "a mistake of two quarts of molasses," it was noted and a settlement of the account was recorded as "from the beginning of the world to the date hereof." A laborer who hired himself out for a year was sure to find his account charged with time lost in sickness, as "Dr to the fever and ague — 4 fits one week and 2 fits the next." To the readers of this book such petty economies and small ways of trade will appear mean and ridiculous if contrasted with the generous methods of modern times. But let us remember that these men and women were poor at the beginning, that they had known things only in the small, that their daily life was labor from sunrise to sunset, that there was little or no money to be had, that those who got any earned it farthing by farthing, and its great cost made them loath to part with it. "It is good," said James Russell Lowell,[1] "to commemorate this homespun past of

[1] Address at the 250th anniversary of Harvard College.

ours ; good in these days of a reckless and swaggering prosperity to remind ourselves how poor our fathers were."

The four towns which have grown up from the little villages that were formed by the settlers on the upper shore of Buzzard's Bay, have from early times been the homes of explorers, sea-captains, and shipbuilders. Of these towns, Rochester, once the most important of all, whose territory included the western shore of the bay as far down as Dartmouth, has given all its salt-water front to its offsprings, Wareham, Marion, and Mattapoiset. It is now an inland farm, "half drowned in sleepy peace."

Old, seagoing, whale-catching Mattapoiset, once busy with ships and shipbuilding, is now looking off upon the sparkling bay from grass-covered wharves. To its summer inhabitants, returning every year from distant cities, it appears to be the "enchantress of repose," while from their lawns and beaches they watch the tides

> "O'er-creep the ridgy sand,
> Or tap the tarry boat with gentle blow,
> And back return in silence, smooth and slow."

Marion, stretched along the southern edge of an almost land-locked harbor, has lost its colonial name of Sippican (the oldest name on the bay), under which it long retained the simple characteristics of a self-supporting village. Its men who chanced to go to sea returned after a while to live in their small, square houses, decorating them with tropical shells, bunches of coral, and other tokens of long voyages. Now the old houses are summer homes of persons at leisure, brand new cottages overlook the bay, and the modernized town is annually thriving on the business of a summer season.

Wareham, the most active town on the bay, stretching its domain from the western around to the eastern shore, is the very land of trout brooks and cranberry harvests. The abundance of fish both in its rivers and streams, and also in the bay, — in fresh water and in salt water alike, — was characteristic of Wareham in colonial times, and it still continues to be the chief attraction to the many sportsmen with rod and hand-line who annually seek its woods and shores. The town also attracts a numerous summer population which sometimes lingers into the

autumn, when large patches of blue fringed gentians are to be seen blossoming by the roadsides. Its belts of oaks, in which children search for mayflowers when south winds have melted the snow; its pine woodlands, "with soft-brown silence carpeted;" its three rivers, its ponds and far outlooks over the bay, are allurements to those who have come from a distance and built cottages on Onset bluffs, or costly dwelling-houses on the necks and headlands of Agawame.

In none of these towns does there remain anything that belonged to the life of colonial times except a few volumes of old records, which have an agreeable savor of quaintness and were written with laborious care, as if the unskilled writers were conscious of an obligation resting upon them to preserve — what has been said to be one of the most interesting forms of human knowledge — a knowledge of the details of the Past.

COLONIAL TIMES ON BUZZARD'S BAY.

I.

THE LANDS OF SIPPICAN.

LEAVING the cars of the Cape Cod railroad at a junction where iron-works have gathered around them a dun-colored village, you enter a wagon and drive away over a sandy road which passes through oak and pine woods, crosses other sandy roads, and after many windings brings you to Fearing Hill. Here you turn into a yard shaded by elm-trees, and alight at a dwelling-house built in the low, square style of the early part of the last century, where, in colonial times, lived "Our trusty and well-beloved John Fearing Esquire;" as he was called in the Commission which he held as a Justice of King George the Second.

In front of the house passes an old high-

way called the country road, coming from the east, and going down the western shore of the bay. It was an ancient path when the English settled in this region, and in the earliest lay-out of lands it was mentioned as then existing. Against the rude stone walls marking its boundaries purple wood-asters and blackberry vines are clustered, in the adjacent fields yellow primroses and meadow pinks are blooming, and the soft September air is laden with the perfume of Indian posies.

Looking around, you are impressed by the picturesque scenery and the quiet of the neighborhood. On the northern horizon stretches an edge of Plymouth Woods, whose tree-tops catch the mists blown over from the ocean when the wind is northeast. Half a mile eastward stands a ridge of low hills covered with pine-trees, and through the valley at their feet runs the Weweantet River southward to the bay. The highway crosses the river by a narrow bridge, the approach to which is hedged by tall bushes of syringas, buttonwoods, and alders. Below the bridge the stream is checked by a dam which expands it to a broad pond, creeping over meadows on this side and into wooded coves on the

other. When the water is low a few tree-stumps dotting its surface appear in the shadowy distance like little boats at anchor.

You hear the hum of a nail factory, out of sight, and you see its steam-jets floating away behind the hills. You hear the whish of a scythe; a man is mowing the aftermath in an old orchard. Yonder you see the dust raised by an ox-team coming up from the salt meadows with a load of hay. A traveler rarely passes along the highway, save the baker from Sippican village, an oysterman, or a butcher driving a tidy white-covered wagon from Wareham Narrows, or itinerant merchants in ladders, fruit-trees, and tin wares, from the interior of the State. Occasionally a sunburnt doctor flits by in a one-horse shay, carrying an apothecary's shop in a little box at his feet. But none of these disturb the universal repose.

All around are pine and oak woods. In many places and at diverse times the woods have been cut down and have again grown up, occupying fields where stone walls now testify that within their leafy enclosures corn and grass formerly grew, and where a few scraggy apple-trees and the weedy ruins of a

cellar-wall show that an old home has disappeared. The present occupants of the farms yet unreclaimed by the forest are making a hard struggle to draw their living out of the exhausted land, which they till as it was tilled in colonial times, when the soil was more fertile and the seasons more propitious than now.

The earliest authentic memorial of this region is to be found in the Plymouth Colony Records of the year 1639; when a "graunt of a plantacion called Seppekann" was made to John Lothrop, a non-conformist minister, who, to escape persecution by Archbishop Laud, had fled from London to New England with a part of his congregation. The grant was not accepted; the minister and his congregation having been induced to settle near the great marshes of Barnstable; where, like true Presbyterians, they observed days of thanksgiving "for the Lord's admirable powerfull working for Old England" by Oliver Cromwell.

After the desolating war with King Philip was ended, all the lands on the western shore of the bay were purchased by a company which comprised many of the principal men in Plymouth Colony. As some of these were

of Kentish descent, the purchased territory became known as the Rochester Propriety. It was esteemed valuable for its fisheries, its pine woodlands, its cedar and spruce swamps, and especially for its great necks extending into the bay, containing rich meadows which had been used by the English "to winter cattle upon," when the limited pasturage on the Plymouth shore became insufficient for the increase of their herds and flocks. North of it was a wilderness encompassing the thinly settled township of Middleborough, known by the Indian name Nemassaket; west of it was a forest covering the Quaker township of Dartmouth, through which went the path to Rhode Island; south of it was the sea, and eastward was the Agawame Plantation.

The purchasers went to work to turn their property to a good account. On March 10, 1679, they met "at Joseph Burgs his house at Sandwitch," and "Ordred that mr Thomas Hinctly mr william Paybody Joseph warrain Samuel white and Joseph Lothrop shall take a vew of the Lands of Scippican and determin wher the house Lots shall be Layed out and if the Land will Beare it to Lay 40 ackors to a house Lot and to have for thair paines 2s

6d a day a peece in mony — and' Samuel white to stay ther with mr Pay body to help Lay out the Lands and Joseph Doty to goe ther to help them and to have 2s p day a peece in mony." Then to attract emigration they declared that those "that first settell and are Livers" there shall be allowed to make on the commons "ten Barrells of tarr a peece for a yeare," for their own use; and that one man's barrel should not be larger than another's, it was distinctly stated that the free tar measure is to be "such as are comonly called small Barrells." Lest purchasers who did not emigrate to the new lands should claim the privilege of making tar which, at that time and until after the Revolution, was a valuable article of commerce, it was "furder ordred that ther shall be none of the said purchasers alowed to Burne or make any Tarre of the pine knots or wood that is within the Limmits" for five years, "upon the penalty of five pound for every default." The value of the great forests for other products was recognized by an order "that ther shall be no Tymber of any sort convaied or carryed a way out of the Lymits of Scippican under the penilltie of twentie Shilings for

every Tree or part of a tree so used and sent or carried away."

The first necessities of the new settlers were a grist-mill and a minister of the Gospel; for a law of the Colony declared "that noe pson be admited to goe to Inhabite upon any such lands that lye soe remote as the Inhabitants thereof can not ordinaryly frequent any place of publicke worship." Therefore, when, in April, 1680, the purchasers drew lots for homesteads and meadows, they appropriated "the first and second house lots with the twentie Ackar Lots that are enpled to them in the great Neke," and two lots in the best of the woodland, "for the minister and for the ministrie." Three years later two of the company were chosen to hunt for "som meet person to preach the word of god to them at Scippican and to procure him if they can;" and also to treat with some persons to build a mill. Soon after this the records refer to a grist-mill about to be built "of such a capassitie as Shee may grind the corne of the Inhabitants for the space of twentie years;" and also to "the house or frame that is got up" for Mr. Samuel Shiverick, whom the proprietors agreed to pay at the

rate of five shillings a share "for his paines in preaching." The next year they ordered "those that are setled Inhabitance" to pay him yearly ten shillings "in mony a peece during the time he shall preach the word of god."

Tradition points to Minister Rock, a huge boulder near the head of Sippican harbor, as the place where the pioneers first met for public worship: —

"On Minister Rock they stood, and as they gazed
Upon the white-caps sailing out to sea,
Their prayerful souls to heaven devoutly raised,
They praised the Lord for christian liberty.
And as they sang 'The hill of Zion yields'
To contrite souls 'A thousand sacred sweets;'
The fragrant marshes seemed like 'heavenly fields,'
The yellow sedges glowed like 'golden streets.'

"The wandering wind had healing in its breath,
Distilled from cedar, pine, and spicy birch;
The sea had saving salt; nor second death
Itself could fright a member of the church.
In ages past the servants of the Lord
Were glad to seek the shadow of a rock;
Here was the ponderous substance, to reward
These scions of a puritanic stock."

Not long afterwards a few of these thrifty Englishmen, attracted by the streams, fish-

eries, and meadows of the easterly part of the territory, planted their homesteads nearer to Fearing Hill and the picturesque banks of the Weweantet.

Meanwhile the title to the lands, which the company held "acording to the deed granted by the Court," was disputed by some of the Indian sachems. These were Charles, who claimed a neck of land which still bears his name, Manomet Peter, and Will Connet, as they were called by the English. The claims were bought, except that of Will Connet, who, claiming to be lord paramount of all the territory bordering on the Weweantet and Woonkinco rivers to "Plymouthes westerly tree at Agawaame," did "disclaime and defie the title of every these men called the purchasers of Sepecan." In 1682 the purchasers prosecuted a suit to dispossess him ; but they were glad to settle it by paying a pound sterling, a trucking cloth coat valued at ten shillings, and by making him a member of their company. His name was then written upon the roll of shareholders — "Substanciall men that are prudent psons and of considerable estates," as the Plymouth Court had described them ; and when they were taxing themselves

"ten shillings a peece in silver mony" to meet their contract for building the grist-mill, it was recorded that "Will Connet promised for him self and his brother John to give six barrells of tarr to wards sd mill."

In 1686 the lands of Sippican were incorporated, and became "Rochester Towne in new England;" but the management of affairs remained with the proprietors, who continued to carry on the general government of the town in entire separation from the body of the inhabitants.

Their supreme authority was used in various ways. To prevent the exportation of lumber they met, in 1687, "at Elder Chapmans house in Sandwitch," and "Ordred that all Timber Bourds Bolts Shinales Claboude Cooper Stuf or shuch like that is brought to the water side or any Landing place where it may be Judged that it will be transported out of the Township shall be forfited the one half there of to the Intermen and the other halfe there of to the Townes use." They also ordered that "no Person what so ever should gett timber upon the undivided Lands for Posts Rails or house frames except the timber so gotten be used

within the township." They made laws forbidding strange Indians "to hunt or catch deer" within the town, and forbidding the inhabitants "to imploy anny such indian in hunting." They made a decree to prohibit every person from cutting "cedar spruce or pine except he fairly demonstrate that he stands in need of it." They gave to their associates liberty "to sett up a grist mill upon the River called mattapoicitt," and "to sett up a mil for Iron works whear it may be secur from hurting people by cuting choyce timber or fire wood." In 1698 they fixed a boundary line with Plymouth; in 1701 they ordered "Samuel Prince Lieut John Hammond and Aron Barlow to setle bounds an run the Line" with Dartmouth; in 1702 they had a controversy with "the Lathrops of barnstable and the tomsons of midleberry whear the bounds shall stand between them and the Proprietors of rochester." In 1706 they fixed a tax upon "what tar hath bin gotten or shall hear after be gotten by the inhabitance of rochester" from their lands, "those yt git it shall pay eight pence for every full gaged barell they git into the clark of the propriety." In 1708

they ordered a fine of five pounds to be paid by every "English or Indian or others who shall set on fire the woods in anny part of the Township and neglect to put it out before they depart the Spott whear the sd fire was made." They ordered that undivided lands in "all the four necks shall remaine after the manner of a common field;" they appropriated lands for highways, and "to make a training field and for a buriing place and to sett a meeting hous upon for the benifit of the Town in Genarall."

Other matters fell to the town meeting, where orders were generally conditioned "with the consent of the proprietors," whose prerogative appears to have been regarded like that of the King. The town meeting dealt with wolves, wildcats, and foxes, making havoc of the farmers' sheep, and with crows, blackbirds, robins, and squirrels, devastating planted fields. Forty shillings were paid in 1699 "for killing of two grown woulves in our town;" at the same time it was made obligatory upon every inhabitant to bring "unto Peter Blackmer the town clark," annually, the heads of four crows and the heads of twelve blackbirds killed by

the bringer, before the last day of May. But it was voted "that whosoever shall kill either squerels, Red birds or jay birds & bring 12 of their heads to the town clark they shall be exsepted and entered in the Room of black birds & crows." So numerous were these farm pests that the town was compelled to enforce their destruction by a fine of two shillings levied upon "every man in Rochester of 21 years old and upward" who did not kill his yearly quota, and "cary the heads of the birds or squarils so killed to the man that is to take a Count of ye wild cats." There was always a bounty to be paid for wildcats and foxes killed in the town, if the head of the beast was brought to "one of the selectmen with both thire eares on to be cut off."[1]

Dogs, kept by farmers to protect their

[1] "a Count of wild cats and foxes killed in the year 1722 capt Holmes & family killed eleven foxes James Stuart fouer wild cats Timothy Stephens 1 cat caleb cowing 1 cat Anthony cumbs 1 cat moses Barlow 1 fox John Wing 1 cat John Briggs 1 fox Jabez Hillard 2 foxes Benjamin hammond 2 foxes 1 wild cat Seth hammond 1 wild cat Benj Dexter Junr & James Hammond 1 cat Jonathan Hammond Junr 1 fox Thomas Turner 1 fox Benjamin Dexter 1 fox David Joseph 1 fox." — *Rochester Town Records.*

sheep from wild beasts, were also a pest, for they persisted in uprooting the early corn. With each return of spring, alewives came up Mattapoiset River from the sea and entered Sniptuit pond, where they were taken by Anthony Comes, who was "chosen to tend the Herring ware carefully and dilligently," and were dealt out to each inhabitant that came for them "for a peck of corne or 6d in money for each 1000." When cornfields were planted alewives were put into the hills, and the hungry dogs, getting nothing to eat at home, pawed open the hills and ate the fish. This made business for the "town meet" of May, 1703, when, as the records say, "it was taken into consideration the great dam that this town hath in time passed suffered by dogs going at Liberty when alewives are planted in cornfields with Indien corn;" and then it was ordered that every "dog Bitch or dog kind" shall be annually fettered on the 20th of April for forty days by "haveing one of theire fore feet fastened up to their neck so as to prevent their digging up of fish so planted."

But neither wolves, dogs, crows, nor alewives distracted the thoughts of the people

from a meeting-house to be "sit on the westerly Sid of the long bridg;" and they "did agree to pay for the meeting-house which was to be builded by a free will offering" of fifty pounds. It was a square building of four gables, finished in 1699, and is described as having "a pulpit and flours and Seats & girts for 3 galerys with 3 Seats apew and windows as the undertakers Shall see convenient." In 1714 it was declared to be too small for the congregation, and it was then enlarged by "an addition made to ye backside." Seats were built "nye the pulpit stairs for Antiant parsons to sett in." Rights to build pews in the enlarged house were sold "at vandue to those that would give most for them and buld sd pues in three month and pay in mony for them in Six months;" it being understood that "the pues be al of a haith and bult work men like." The allotted spots for pews were gradually occupied, and then permission was given to certain persons to build pews, "on the beams over the galeries," and upon other lofty perches above the heads of the congregation, "provided they do it decently," and "on their own cost." One of these lofty-pew builders was Timothy

Ruggles, junior. He had just graduated at Harvard College and had returned to his native town to begin the practice of law, when he obtained permission to build the pew whose commanding position on the beams of the meeting-house was typical of his position in subsequent years as one of the most prominent citizens of New England, in civil and military affairs.

The natural parsimony of the people which led them to prefer to patch out the old meeting-house rather than spend money for a new one was again shown in December, 1730, when the shabby condition of its windows was making the cold house colder; and it was voted "to mend the Glass that is Least broken and where the Glass is Quite Gone to nail up bords in Lue thereof for ye preasant."

The first minister in this meeting-house was Samuel Arnold, who had begun to preach to the town in 1690, and to whom, in 1697, the proprietors of the lands gave a "whole shear of upland and meadow ground," upon condition "that he continueth in the work of the ministry among them till prevented by death." After continuing in this work

for thirteen years he organized a church, and recorded the fact in these pious words: "It hath pleased our gracious God to shine in this dark corner of this wilderness and visit this dark spot of ground with the dayspring from on high, through his tender mercy to settle a church according to the order of the Gospel October 13, A. D. 1703."

As some townsmen, who were not of the prevailing religious faith, protested against paying the ministry taxes, a town meeting of 1709 was charitable enough "to abate the sum of ten pounds upon such inhabitance as are of contrery judgement & now professed Quakers." Then they raised forty pounds "for the incoragement & soport of a minister;" and, mr Arnold being dead, they "made choice of mr Timothy Ruggles," in 1710, to be their minister, to be by them "Treated with & duly incoraged in order to a Settlement." He was a graduate of Harvard College, and a great-grandson of Thomas Dudley, the second governor of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay. He was "incoraged" to settle by a salary of thirty pounds, a gift of seventy acres of land for a farm, the use of the glebe, or, as it was designated in

the records, the "uplands medows & ceadder & spruce swamps of the ministreys shear," by building for him a house — "the sd mr Ruggles finding and providing all the nails & glasse," and by boarding him "at Roger Hascols" until the house was done. He continued to be the town-minister for fifty-eight years, or "till prevented by death."[1]

[1] The following letter from the Rev. Timothy Ruggles, addressed to the Rev. John Howland, of Plympton, is preserved among the papers of the Rev. Ezra Stiles in the library of Yale College: "Revd. Sir, In answer to yours of the 30th of Aug. last I would say I am not able to say anything as to any uneasiness of the Neighbour ministers with Relation to the settlement of The Revd Mr Saml Arnold &c. This I find by the Church Records he left now in my hand that he lived Thirteen years in the work of the ministry before his ordination in Rochester & as I well Remember the only Reason of that was for want of members to Imbody. I find by sd Records he was ordained 13th of October, 1703: & there was seven members beside himself Imbodied at his ordination and he was in the 56 year of his age and he dyed in the year 1708. I remember I often heard the antientest people & brightest Christians say that they had one Mr Shievereck, a lay preacher, with them before Mr Arnold who was in their opinion not comparable with Mr Arnold, who after settled at Falmouth. Mr Arnold, by all I could learn by the brightest Christians here at my first coming, was an Eminent Christian who walked close with God. His Father was a minister & gave him a good Education, who had only

The proprietors also left the school, the highways, and the poor to the care of town meeting, which in 1706 chose "mrs jane mashell for to teach childered & youth to Reed & to writte;" for "her panes" she was "to have her dyet and to receive twelve pounds." She kept her school in different places between Mattapoiset Neck and Woonkinco River. For two or three years she was the chosen teacher; but doubts arose about the soberness of her conversation and it is recorded that three ungallant men, "joseph Benson john dexter & ichabod burg requested to have theire protest entered for that they accounted she was not as the law directs."

In 1712, John Myers "was made choice of to sarve in the office of a Skoll master," and it was voted "to raise twelve pounds in money to pay him for his pains in keeping of

a private Education himself. I have often heard from some of the Neighbouring Ministers who survived him that they esteemed him as a worthy minister & approved him as a good Divine but not so well skilled in Church Discipline as some others. Sir, with sutable compliments to yourself & Madam I rest yours to serve,

"TIMO. RUGGLES.

"Roch. 8. Sept. 1764."

Skool to teach children & youth to Read & write & to have his dyet provided for him." His school was to be kept at five places in the town during the year, "first at White Hall then at the centre 3^{ly} at mattapoisit 4^{ly} at the fresh meadows and 5^{ly} at Sepecan." The distance between the third and fourth places was about ten miles by the country road. After him there were years when no school was kept, for a teacher was not to be had; and, in 1720, the town having been presented by the grand jury of the county for "not being provided with a Scoolmaster," paid "Capt Winslow twenty shillings for Answaring the Towns presentment." When in 1732 Benjamin Delano undertook to keep the town school in five places during the year, his compensation was thirty pounds with "Dyat washing & Lodging & hors to Ride." As pounds were then of small value in silver money his principal reward was his board and washing and the use of the horse that carried him to his work.

The northeasterly boundary of Rochestertown was then an imaginary line in the woods crossing the Woonkinco River. Thereabout were natural fresh meadows, and

on the river a grist-mill, and a mill pond, the same that now, with its wooded banks and shaded coves, forms an attractive picture in the centre village of Wareham.[1] Near the mill stood a cluster of dwelling-houses known, from the meadows, as the Fresh-meadow Village. It was one of the stations of the town's migratory school; and a town meeting of 1722 specified it as one of the five villages in which notice of the arrest of "A Ram or Rames in Rochester Running at Larg" must be posted: —

"if in the village called the center at the hous of John Clapp

& if in the villeg called Sepycan at the hous of John Briggs

[1] The celebrated Peter Oliver, the last Chief Justice of the Province of Massachusetts Bay, was in 1746 an owner of this mill pond. He settled at Middleborough in 1744, and for thirty years carried on a successful business as an iron founder, living in ostentatious style in a sightly mansion known as Oliver Hall. In 1774 he was impeached "for receiving his salary from the king." Departing with other loyalists for Old England, he wrote in his diary: "Boston, 1776, March 27, Here I took my leave of that once happy country, where peace and plenty reigned uncontrouled, till that infernal Hydra Rebellion, with its hundred Heads, had devoured its happiness, spread desolation over its fertile fields, and ravaged the peacefull mansions of its inhabitants."

And if in the village called Sneptuet at the hous of Cap^{t} Edward Winslow

& if in the fresh meadow village & Weweantet at Isaac Bumpus his mill

& if at Mattapoyset village at the house of John Hammond"

As these people were born into a life of frugal habits, and had learned to know the large value of small things, they could not sink into abject poverty. Their wants were supplied by their daily labors, and by the voyages of their sloops to the islands of the West Indies, to which they sent tar, rosin, and turpentine, to be exchanged for rum, sugar, and molasses. The only allusion to a pauper during the period with which this narrative has to do is in the town records of 1721, when it was voted, in regard to an unfortunate neighbor, that "Eleven pounds be paid in money to any man that will take and keep" him a year, and find him "vettuals & close sutable unless the Court Determines him to be maintained by his Relations."

One December day in 1729 the selectmen summoned the householders of the town "In his Maj^{sts} name to assemble and meet to Geather att ye Meeting house" to consider

a work of charity. It was announced that some townspeople needed aid, and "especially ye family of Benjamin Burges Deceased who are in Great want at preasant." Then they who had been too parsimonious to give anything for the building of a new meetinghouse when it was said to be needed, opened their cellars and handed out corn and wheat by the peck and half bushel, beef and pork and butter by the pound, molasses by the gallon; all which were entrusted to "Sam Look to Deliver ye same to the use of sd family as they shall stand in need."

The people were generally prosperous in their affairs. They had a small commerce by sea as early as 1697, when "the Townes gennarall Landing place" was established on the northerly side of Sippican harbor.[1] A wharf was built at the harbor in 1708, and for its maintenance a tax of "one shilling in money for every boats load of whet saeder

[1] "Whear as Samuel briggs hath alowed a cart way through his Lands down to the Townes gennarall Landing place on the northerly side of the harber in case sd bridggs Receave damage by anny Cart or parson either by breaking or Leaving open sd briggs his Gattes or Railes he or they shall surly pay the whol damage that doth accrew to sd briggs thereby." — *Rochester Town Records*, 1697.

brought on or carried of," was decreed. The freeholders of the town were wealthy enough as early as 1714 to send Samuel Prince as their representative to the Great and General Court at Boston, and after him Thomas Dexter, paying them five shillings a day and their expenses. As long as the royal government lasted they continued to send representatives, one of whom was the famous Timothy Ruggles, son of the town minister, a man of lordly address, strict integrity, high talents, and strong convictions, always loyal to the King, even when loyalty caused him to lose his property and his country.[1]

In 1734 the inhabitants of Mattapoiset Village, having complained that they were so remote from the centre of the town as "to make their Difficulty Great in all publick Conserns," were allowed to become a precinct, by which they were entitled to a minister, a parish, and a meeting-house of their own; while they continued to be a part of

[1] In the years immediately preceding the Revolution he was leader of the King's party in the legislature. He embarked from Boston with the King's troops in 1775, and made his home near Annapolis, Nova Scotia, where he died, an exile, in 1795.

the town. In the same year, on the petition of "sundry Bumpases," Rochester consented to set off its east end to be joined to the Agawame Plantation, in the composition of a new town, by a boundary described as "beginning at the mouth of Sepecan River & Running up the River to mendalls Bridge Thence as ye Rhode now Lieth to plymouth till it meets with middleborough line."

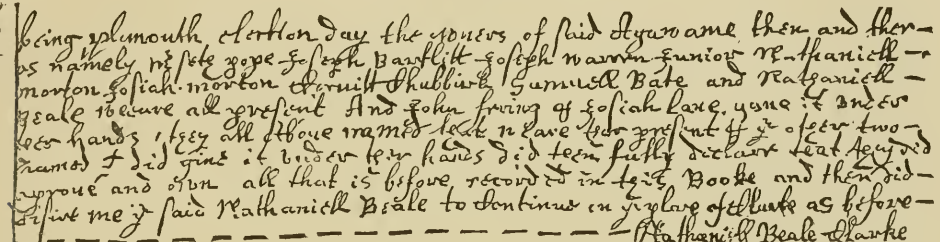
This road still "lieth to Plymouth" as of yore. As the traveler worries his horse through its wheel-deep sands, a covey of partridges breaks out of the berry bushes at the roadside, a hare or a gray squirrel scampers across the ruts, the pale blossoms of a clump of house-leeks tell the place where a hearthstone once stood, and he may see at intervals in the openings of the forest granite posts marked with an R and a W, defining the exact line between the old town and the new.

II.

THE AGAWAME PLANTATION.

ADJOINING the east end of Rochester was the Agawame Plantation of about eight thousand acres. Its early history has been preserved in an old Booke, whose yellow leaves of English paper, water-marked with crown and fleur-de-lis, are written in quaint characters difficult for an untrained eye to read.

The territory is mentioned in the early records of Plymouth Colony as a discovery: "the South Meddowes towards Aggawam lately discovered and the convenyent uplands there abouts." The colony bought it from Indians — "natives of New England" they were called, and in 1682 sold it to six Englishmen for two hundred and eighty pounds, current money, to obtain the means of building a meeting-house in Plymouth town. It was more attractive than the colder lands on Plymouth shore, where "divers corne fields



"June ye third 1690

TRANSLATION.

being plimouth election day the owners of said Agawame then and thereas namely Mesrs Seth Pope Joseph Bartlitt Joseph Warren Junior Nathaniell Morton Josiah Morton Cornitt Chubbuck Samuell Bate and Nathaniell Beale wheare all present And John Fearing & Josiah Lane gave it under ther hands — they all Above named that weare ther present & ye other two named yt did give it under ther hands did then fully declare that they did aproue and owne all that is before recorded in this Booke and then did Disire me ye said Nathaniell Beale to Continue in ye place of Clarke as before.

Nathaniell Beale Clarke.

and little running brookes," seen under a December sky, had invited the Mayflower pilgrims to stay. It contained many springs of sweet water, and small lakes on whose shores beaver and otter were trapped. In the vast forest which covered the uplands deer were hunted and streams ran abounding in trout. It had rich salt meadows which were intersected by creeks whose marshy banks were a resort of curlew and plover, and there was abundance of bird life along the shores when the mud slopes were left bare by the ebbing tide. It lay at the head of the bay, whose waters washed it on three sides, and its coast line is still indented by coves rich in shellfish, is fringed by islands and sandy beaches, and fronts the slumbering sea by a long ridge of highland from which the eye ranges southward as far as the Elizabeth Islands, and over as pleasing a panorama of sea and shore as is to be found in New England.

The purchasers, who had divided their estate into six shares, met and laid out six "home lotts" of sixty acres each, "to build any hous or housen upon." They met again and laid out "sixe tracts of meadow," and to

prohibit the making of tar in the common forest, they ordered that "not any pine notts liing upon ye undevided lands should be made use of by any man untill such time as ther was an allowance by the said owners soe to doe." Desiring to divide more uplands and meadows and to lay out "convenient publike & private high waies," they appointed four of their number to carry on these improvements; and when they met, in 1696, they "declared thar selves contented and satisfid with what was don and there set too thare handes in the smal bucke where all thes devisins ware first writen."

By this time some dwelling-houses had been built. The records of 1688 mention the house of Joseph Warren as "now standing thare." From him the promontory, near to which Bostonians have built their summer dwellings, took its name; it is quaintly described as "bounded by the see esteward and southward and northward by his own medo on the cove." Other houses were clustered near a secluded place where

> "A winding wall of mossy stone,
> Frost-flung and broken, lines
> A lonesome acre thinly grown
> With grass and wandering vines,"

which, in the records, is designated as the place where "some persons have been laid already at." It was the neighborhood of the early settlers; they lived in sight of the acre, and within it they were buried.

In 1701 the proprietors, intending "to Laye oute sum hie waye into the Neckes" on the bay, looked into their old Booke and found that a highway "must of neseseti come over the southerd end of Samuel Bate his home lots which was veri much damig" to him. Therefore each gave him as compensation "his sevrel rite in two or three small peses of medo," — an illustration of the equity with which the members of this agrarian community dealt with each other. In the same year two lots of land and a meadow were "laid oute two and for the yuse of the ministre." In 1711 it is recorded that they built "a good and sufficient pound." A pound-keeper was appointed, also two haywards to "bring out and impound such cretures" as were found in the commons without right to be there, for which service they were paid "what shall be Judged Reasonable more then what ye Law will give for ye poundage." The building of the pound, the most ancient of all

English institutions, is the first evidence of the existence of a village community in Agawame. It was needed before there was a schoolhouse, a meeting-house, or a town organization.

The authority of the proprietors was still supreme in the community. It appears in a law which they made to protect the production of turpentine; prohibiting "ani parsen from boxing or chiping and milking ani pine tre or tres on the common on the penelty of payeng Ten Shilengs for everi tre," of which fine the informer "shall have won halfe for himselfe and the other halfe to the proprieters." Following the custom of ancient Teutonic farmers who felled wood in a common forest and grazed cattle in a common pasture, they stinted the pastures, restricting each proprietor to graze only "thurtitoo nete catel and fouer horses for a sixte parte," or "six sheepe instead of one Beast." They appointed an officer to watch the pastures to see that they were equitably enjoyed and to report if any man sent in more cattle than his proportion; the watchman "to have his horse go into ye Necks freely so long as other horses go in." Farmers who were not

proprietors were allowed pasturage on unused rights if they brought to the watchman "a note or token to his sattisfaxion whose Rite they come upon." In winter, when cattle and horses ran wild in the necks along the bay shore, the times of turning in and driving out were fixed. In summer the pastures were stinted severely, excluding all cattle or reducing their number, that the grass might have a chance to grow. This was an inconvenience to some of the farmers, but they had no relief. The proprietors of Agawame were lords of the manor, and although they owed allegiance to Plymouth there was no one who ventured to challenge their authority.

Here was the image of a town system based upon the rights of property in land. Its superintending power was the owners of the land in regular meeting assembled, enacting such regulations as a major part of them saw fit, and appointing such officers as they deemed to be necessary for their purposes. In their acts they were preparing for the time when their agrarian commune must be expanded into a town organized under the laws of the province; when new-comers as

well as old residents would have an equal right to be heard in the town meeting.

After the shareholders had dedicated "one acre for a Burying place," and lands for a grist-mill, a saw-mill, and the fisheries, they ordered that the common lands be laid out and divided to themselves. Their numbers had increased and their meetings were not always harmonious; there was a minority whose independent spirit often delayed the action of the majority and sometimes caused to be entered upon the records a formal protest against the proceedings. For example, it is recorded that, at a meeting in 1712, "Oliver Norris himself being present did desire it might be Entred by ye Clarke that he did protest agenst ye most of ye votes that ware Past."

At each annual meeting they elected a moderator, listened to the clerk as he read the records from their old Booke, adopted their customary orders, refreshed themselves at the bar of the inn and went their ways. As years passed by, and estates were divided from father to sons, their transactions decreased in importance, and their business was finally reduced to re-surveys of boundary lines — in

dispute because the old landmarks (a "whit ock tree," or a "stake with a heepe of stones laide to it") had disappeared, to the renting of an island, and to the care of the alewives which, with each return of spring, entered the Agawame River. The old Booke relates some of their proceedings during this time, — as, for example, that in 1763 they undertook to establish a free school by appropriating for that purpose two promissory notes which had been given for two catches of fish in the river, of the value of a few Spanish dollars; that in 1773 they undertook to increase the alewife fishery by making a tide-way up Red Brook into White Island Pond. This hopeful speculation turned out as profitless as the South Sea Bubble; but when its thirty promoters met they were in such jovial spirits in anticipation of the success of their enterprise, that their meeting, at the village inn, was called in the records a merry meeting, and when their overflowing bumpers had been emptied they named their new river the Merry Meeting River, and voted "to carry Herring into sd River to Breed."

Often at their annual meetings they "Voted to vandue Wickets Island for plant-

ing," — an island off the camp at Onset, — and as late as 1791, touched with sympathy for the miserable relics of the original owners of their ancestors' lands, they ordered their treasurer "to pay out the money to the poor Ingings that he received for the use of the island."

And so a run of fish and a little island continued to be their business until they met no more. All their interests had been absorbed by the larger interests of the town. But their ancient and well-thumbed Booke of Records remains as the foundation of the titles by which every estate in that large territory is now held. It also preserves the quaint names of the old landmarks: — there is "the big rocke nigh ye gret salte poun which runneth into the Se;" there is "the broocke which cometh oute of the willo swamp;" there is "the plas wher the fenc of the pine neke goieth into the water;" there is "ye Long Look" down the bay, and "the small frech poun;" there is the ford of the river called "the place whear the horses comonly goe over," and "ye old mans spring," and "ye sandy pointe at ye upland," and "the letel harber," and "that island

of flates bounded round with ye chanel." The Booke preserves the first names of the promontories jutting into Manomet Bay, as it was then called, of the islands, the coves, the creeks, the springs, and the many nooks of meadow which stretch into the pine woods from the salt marshes by the shore.

III.

COLONIAL FARMERS.

THE largest landowner in the plantation was Israel Fearing. He kept a diary of local events, blended with some carefully written accounts, stating the values of all sorts of things entering into the commerce of his times. It makes a picture of the farming life of his neighbors, framed in a parchment-bound volume on which is inscribed "Israel Fearing his Booke bought Ianuary the 10 day 1722" — when George the First was King. This antique book tells of trades and barters, of agreements and indentures, of impressments into the King's military service, of marriages and trials by His Majesty's justice of the peace, and whatever else concerned the people living upon the farms. It tells us that these people were shrewd in their bargains, honest in their reckonings, industrious in their habits, and bound by a close economy

which made them contented with small savings and small gains. The whole family — sons, daughters, and indentured servants, took up their daily work before sunrise, suspended it only for their meals, and ended it only when the candles were put out at early bedtime. The women did the housework, tended the hens, the geese, and the calves, scoured the brass warming-pans and pewter dishes, spun flax and wool yarns, and wove them into cloths from which the clothing and bedding of the family were made by their own hands; and if more was made than was needed at home, it was bartered away. The purpose of all was to get out of the farm every farthing that it would yield, and to squander nothing.

These men and women were of pure English blood, of an even social condition, descended from those who had come to the coasts of Massachusetts between the years 1620 and 1650. Their farm labors were too exacting to allow many opportunities for mental culture; but they were people of good sense, who feared God and honored the King, who wrote the English language as well as it was commonly written by the people of England at that time, and better than it is written

by some New England farmers to-day. Their peculiar phrases and grotesque forms of speech had grown out of the fashions of Puritanism ; and if their writings amuse us by the comical combination of letters which formed their words, it is because they often wrote by sound ; although they made peculiar deviations from their phonetic system (as in writing idpsland for island), and sometimes they spelled words as they are spelled in the English Bible, which, with Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, first printed at Boston in 1681, was their principal reading. They scorned punctuation in their writings, and in the use of capital letters they were all at sea.

The wonder is that they could write at all. When we consider their isolated situations, that there were but few schools in the colony, and these were of short duration and of low grade, that all laws intended to maintain schools had been, as the legislators declared, "shamefully neglected," we must attribute the ability of the farmers to write so well as they did to an education received by the fireside at home.

Their principal interests were in the use of the soil, which they fertilized with fish and

sea-weeds, producing abundant crops of corn, rye, wheat, oats, and flax. They also traded in peltries, fish, and timber. They gathered iron ore from bogs and ponds, and turpentine from pine-trees. So valuable was the right to gather turpentine regarded that it was specially mentioned in deeds of woodlands, granting "All ye privilidge of milking of pine trees." Their larder was bountifully supplied with food, and they supplemented their tables with game from the forests, with water-fowl and shore birds, which frequented the maritime parts of the plantation in great numbers. Besides what food the sea liberally furnished, they had a choice from flesh of beef, mutton, venison, partridge, and wild turkeys.

They dealt with each other in trade by barter, and accounts were allowed to stand open for years before they were balanced. When the amounts had been carefully reckoned and certified, the balance was adjusted with a promise to rectify thereafter any mistake. Here are some illustrations from the queer and precise entries in the old book: —

1729. "Reconed with Joseph blakmor and thare is due him one bushall of wheat and 12 bushalls

of otes and 11 bushalls of inden corn and one shilling"

1731. "Reconed with margret bates as Execter to har husband and ol acounts balenced A mistak in Reconing 6 shilling for my hos"

1733. "Reconed with Ebnezer Swift and thare is a mistak of 2 quarts of maleses"

1738. "Reconed with Ebnezer Luce and acounts balanced from the begining of the world to the date here of"

1746. "Reconed with Epram Tobey and acounts ballenced all but ye 6 pounds and 12 Shillings Left for consideration"

1747. "Reconed with Nathaniel chubback And Acounts balenced and hee saith he is sattes fied about ye fouer pound and will say Nomore"

1748. "Reconed with Olever Nores and acounts balenced and thare is due to me twelve Shillings in mony and one days worck"

1750. "Reconed with Ester Savery before biniamin Bese and She and I promas If thare bee any mestack to Rit it"

Accounts with laborers were written in the book; and it was not forgotten to charge for "time loost," even when it was lost in fever-and-ague fits:—

"January the 28 day 1727 Theopilus Wood hiered him self to mee for 1 Yeare for 36 pounds"

"April — Dr to siknes the fever and ago 4 fites one weke and three the next"

"febuary 1736 Samuel bates to worck with me 6 mounth for 22 pounds and if he loos Any time to abate acordingly and If I se cause to have him make up the los of timme after he hath made his Salt hay he is to du it"

"November 8 1737 Ebnezer bessee to work for mee to 10 day of March at night with his own ax and I am to find him meet drink washing and loging And I am to give him the vallew of 10 pounds but not in mony and hee is to cut 2 cords of wood in a day when hee doth no other work"

Another bargain was made with this man and his axe to work eight months, —

"and I am to pay him one half in goods and the other in bills of credit and if I think he dont ern his wages he is to go Away"

Two Indians who had agreed to dig a ditch were paid in rum, cider, corn, pork, "2 mugs of fleep 1 knife 1 Ax 1 Shurt 1 diner."

The following are examples of bargains recorded in the book: —

"Memarandum of a bargen with John Nores and Roulan Swift for pine wood abouf y^{e} going

over y^e^ River on y^e^ Northerly Side and I am to have two Shillings per cord and thay are to cut off y^e^ pine If thay can git it down and thay are to cut one lood At y^e^ Uperind of y^e^ Loot and If they cannot git them down then I am to Loos y^e^ wood and they to Loos thare Labour"

"A bargen with Jonathan Chubbuck — hee is to clear a peace of ground of mine at ye River for one pound and one Shilling And hold plow for 6 Shillings and hee is to plant ye ground and how 3 times and I am to plow ye ground and find ye seed and I am to have one half And hee is to gather ye corn and to cut ye Stocks and wee are to devid In ye heap And Shock and hee Is to how in ye Rie and Reep and Shock ye rie and wee are to devid in ye Shock and hee to find ye rie and I to put in my creaters as I ues to dow"

"A bargin with hanary Sanders Juner for pine wood to cut it on the South Side of ye Croked River and to put on bord y^e^ Sloop hee to have 6 Shillings and I to have y^e^ Rest and hee is to cut 20 cords on ye furder side of ye Muddy cove and hee is to have 8 Shillings old ten when hee hath put it on boord ye Sloop and I ye rest of ye mony."

Whatever was wanted by one neighbor could be obtained in barter from others.

"April 1737 Receved of Joseph Giford two hox sets of melases for my turpen tine one hun-

dred and 6 gallons 4 shillings and 2 pence the gallon one hoxet one hundred and 7 gallons"

A load of hay was exchanged for five pairs of new shoes, which were afterwards sold with stockings made by Israel Fearing's eldest daughter Ann, and a skin for a pair of breeches, as stated in this account:—

"february 20d 1745 marck hascul Dr for one Lood of hay fouer pound and 12 shillings old tener. Recived of marck hascul five pars of Shues fouer pounds 12 Shilling old ten

"April 25 day 1745 Jonathan Chubback Dr for one pare of Shues twenty shillings If hee pay it in one month And If not then to give mee twenty two shillings

"July 1746 Elezer King D^r^ for one
pare of Shues . . . £01–05–00
to one pare of Stockens of
Ann 00–16–00
to one Scen for briches . 00–05–00
to patterns and thread and
tow cloth . . . . . 00–05–00"

The book shows that the variety of the commodities exchanged included cradles and coffins, cloths, and clothing. To the widow Margret Bates "bordes and nayles for a cofen" were supplied, and to Thomas Bates

"bordes and posts for your cradel," and "timber for your house."

Swapping horses was a common form of barter. A note in the old book reads: —

"John bump promased to give mee fouer pounds old tener by ye foot of ye year beetween our mars in ye Swap"

Some of the farmers built scows for transporting wood, and sloops for freighting it to market, and also craft for fishing and whaling. A launch of a vessel, which was usually built in the woods, sometimes more than a mile from the water, was an event which attracted general attention. It was loaded on two pairs of wheels, and was hauled by many yoke of oxen to the launching place. The wheels were then run into the water until the vessel floated off. Whaling voyages in which the farmers were associated occupied but a few months at sea, as the blubber was brought home in casks and tried out on shore. The old book says: —

"febuary 26 in 1737 agread with Josiah peary for Josiah Wood to go this Spring coming A Whael Vige with him for 5 pounds and 5 shillings per mounth from the time he goeth from hom And one pound of whale bone more in all"

"March the 28 day 1737
Josiah Wood went Easterd on the Whale Viage
Augest the 12 day att night Josiah Wood was cleared from Josiah peary from whalin"

The outcome of this voyage was probably in the following memorandum: —

"desember the 1 day 1737 Receved of Josiah peary forteen pounds And he saide If the mony is not good he will take it and give me better"

One of the laws of the province required the farmers to send to a tanner all "hides or skins as either by casualty or slaughter came to hand;" it forbade butchers, curriers, and shoemakers to "exercise the feat or mystery of a tanner," and it forbade him to exercise any other trade. The farmers had accounts with tanners like the following: —

"Ichabd King had of me 2 skens to dres in 1733 december 6 day to 4 mor skens to tan for me the one maid 47 one 52 one 51 pounds the other a cones sken: the 52 paide for in parte of excainging of a hos in 1734 to 2 doges skens to dres and 2 sheep skens in 1735 to one cow hide"

This tanner took in payment of his account corn and rye and "one dog" to balance it. Some took one half of the skins in payment for the exercise of their "mystery:" —

"April 1737 cared to Ebenezer Peary to dres one hos hide for a bage one cow hide and 4 kepes Scenes to tan and to curey to the halves — Dr to one calves Scen that he dresed and I am to have the neext"

The currency was so bad that leather was sometimes used as an equivalent of money; as in 1749, "paide to Roulan Tupper one pound and Seventeen Shillings and Sixpence in leather."

Iron was also used in the same manner: —

"desember 1744 Sold to mr Joshua bensen 20 bushalls of corn and 20 bushalls of rye for twelve shillings per bushall and to be paide in bloomary Iron to be delivered at my hous at four pounds old tener per hundred but good Iiron

November ye 18 1746 benianan Eles D^r^ for Iron to be paid in Smith worck twenty-fouer pounds ten Shillings and Six pence"

So also rye and corn were of value in trading: —

"John Fearing bought a gun of Nehemia bese for 3 bushalls of corn and 3 bushalls of rye at six pounds twelve Shillings and If ye corn or rye fecheth more by the 18 day of Augest he is to give it and to pay for mending his gun If he Redeemeth her"

The prices of all things were affected by the varying value of colonial bills of credit.

which, according to a letter written by Governor Belcher at Boston in 1739, were "not worth five shillings in the pound of the current silver money of this Province." This currency, known as old tenor, described in the General Court records as "printed bills of equal value with money," was first issued by the Massachusetts colony in 1690 and 1691 to defray the cost of an expedition sent to capture Quebec. The first legislature under the charter of 1692 made these bills "equivalent to money," by which was meant equivalent to gold and silver coinage, for all payments except in specified cases. Their credit was maintained by receiving them in public payments at a premium. After the passage of this legal-tender act gold and silver coins were rapidly exported to England. Other issues of printed bills in subsequent years were made "equal to money," and it became a general complaint that gold and silver coins were "not to be had." Trade came to a stand-still. Farm produce was the best of all values.

In 1737 a new issue of paper money, called new tenor, was made. It was to be redeemed after five years "in silver money at six shil-

lings and eight pence per ounce." One shilling of this was valued as three shillings of old tenor. Representatives whose pay had been six shillings a day for attendance at the legislature and for traveling to and fro, counting twenty miles as a day's journey, were now paid two shillings a day in new tenor bills. But the redemption promised was not made, and by a further repudiation, four pounds for one was fixed as the rate of exchanging old tenor for new.

In 1749 by legal enactment forty-five shillings of old tenor, or eleven shillings and three pence of new, were redeemed by a Spanish-milled dollar; and it was also enacted that after March, 1750, all debts and contracts "shall be understood to be payable in coined silver" at these rates. The means of making this adjustment were furnished by the receipt of one hundred and eighty-three thousand six hundred and forty-nine pounds two shillings and seven pence sterling granted by Parliament "to reimburse the Province their Expenses in taking and securing for his Majesty the Island of Cape Breton and its dependances." [1]

[1] "Sunday Aug. 6. The Mermaid man-of-war, Capt Montague sailed from Portsmouth for Boston having on board

The value of the colonial pound in its relation to the Spanish dollar was now fixed by law; it was equal to three dollars and thirty-three and one third cents in silver, and a shilling was one sixth of a dollar. This currency and its reckonings continued in use in New England more than a hundred years.

The man whose accounts and writings have been quoted was a representative of the thrifty class of farmers of his time. His book shows that he was sought for as an arbitrator in differences between neighbors; as when in 1747 he charged Zacceus Bump "for going to plimoth to stop ye action with Squer Bartlet £1– More to going to

650,000 ounces of foreign silver coin and ten tons of copper purchased by Sir Peter Warren and Mr. Bollan, agents for New England, with the money paid them at the Exchequer, for indemnifying that colony for their expenses about Cape Breton."— *Gentleman's Magazine, August, 1749.*

"I congratulate you, Gentlemen, upon the favour of Divine Providence in the Safe Arrival of the Money allowed by the Parliament of Great Britain, whereby we are enabled in a good Measure to pay off the great Debt contracted by the Charge of the late War & now lying upon this Province; And We by the Blessing of God upon Our wise & faithful management of this Advantage, deliver this Province from the Evils & Mischiefs arising from the uncertain & sinking value of the Paper Medium." — *Lieut.-Governor Phips, November 23, 1749.*

Rogester for power of Aturny fech Squire Winslo down here £1–5–6." By his acquisitions he came to be regarded as one of that class which the colony court had described as "Substanciall men that are prudent psons and of considerable estates in the Lands of Scippican." [1] He received the first commission given to an inhabitant of Wareham as His Majesty's justice of the peace, an office of great dignity. His court records, written in a medley of farming accounts and notes of bargains, contain only the two cases here quoted of cursing and swearing in violation of the law, indicating that conversational language was, in his day, kept under a closer restraint than it is now: —

"October 21-1748 Ebnezer Swift of falmouth for profain Swaring two times in my hearing paide

[1] At Israel Fearing's death in June, 1754, his real estate was appraised at £4,000, and his personal estate at £510. In the latter there was pewter ware £15, but no china ware; there were two saddle mares, two saddles, two carts, but no vehicle for traveling purposes. The inventory specified £2–13–4 in "Loombs and Tacklg," £5 in books, £225 in money and notes, £57 in bedding and furniture, £55 in "Chest-drawers and chests," £16 in apparel.

His wife Martha, daughter of Benjamin and Ann Gibbs of Sandwich, where her birth is recorded "on ye last day of Oct 1699," died in September, 1754.

his fine twenty Shillings old tener to mee Israel Fearing Justes of peac"

"March y^e^ 2d day 1749 A complant came to mee of Joseph Savery of Rogester cursing Ensin Ebnezer burg two times and hee paid his fine twenty Shillings old tener to mee Israel Fearing Just of peac"

At his death the account-book fell into the hands of his son Noah, as executor, who, after dividing the large estate, made this quaint note concerning the remnants : —

"April 1755 — The a Count of what Every one Received That was Fathers Estate old tener.

Benjamin Had a pair of Shues . . .	£1–5–0
John Had a pair of Nee Buckels Silver	4–0–0
David Had a Beaver Hat	4–0–0
David Had Cash	1–10–0
I Had one wosted Cap and a pair of old Shoues	1–10–0
I had a ox and Benj^a^ Had another ox	30–0–0"

IV.

THE SQUIRE.

JOHN, who received the silver knee-buckles, having taken unto himself a wife, became the proprietor of the farm on Fearing Hill; and having been appointed to succeed his father in the office of His Majesty's Justice of the peace, the title Esquire was written as an appendage to his name. The people, looking upon him as a unique figure in their community, spoke of him as The Squire and treated him with respect, for they regarded him as the representative of "our Soveraign Lord the King." To speak profane words in his presence was an offense punishable by a fine, or by a sitting in the town stocks. He had to do with the domestic as well as with the civil life of the town. By his consent only could indentures of service be entered into;[1] and a

[1] "Rebeekah wickod indenters at Capt Edward Wenslows And she is to live With me fourteen years and nine

funeral could not take place "on the Lord's Day or evening following," except by his permission, to be given only in urgent cases. He was not nominated for the office by the ruling power because he was wise and learned in the law; but rather because he was one of the "most sufficient persons" dwelling in the county, known to be loyal, of dignified deportment, and possessed of lands or tenements yielding a certain annual value. The oath to which he subscribed bound him to

mounths from 2d day of May, 1729." — *Israel Fearing's Book.*

An Indenture of service was a written agreement entered into with the consent of two of His Majesty's justices of the peace for the county. By its usual form the woman servant bound herself to learn the "Art Trade or Mystery" of her master; to dwell at his house; obey his reasonable commands gladly; his "Secrets keep close; Damage not willfully to do; Goods not to waste, embezel, purloine or lend to others; at Cards, Dice, or any other unlawful Game not to play; Fornication not to commit, nor Matrimony contract with any Person during said Term." On the other part the master was bound to cause her to be taught "the Trade Art or Mystery of Spinning both Wollen and Linen and to read English;" to provide for her good and sufficient "Victualls and Drink Washing and Lodging and Cloaths of all kinds;" and at the end of her term to dismiss her with "two Good Suits of Apparell for all parts of her Body, one for Holly Days and one for Working Days."

"dispense justice equally and impartially in all cases and do equal right to the poor and to the rich after your cunning wit and power according to law."

The colonial laws which he administered had been made by wise legislators, who intended that there should be neither traveling, labor, amusements, nor funerals on Sunday; but a solemn and decorous observance of the day by masters and servants, and a general attendance at the public services in the meeting-house; that there should be no profane swearing, nor cursing of persons or creatures; no drunkenness, nor brawls; that debtors must pay their debts either with money or with service. Here are some extracts from the records written by His Majesty's justice of the peace, showing how he executed the laws of the province: —

"September ye 23 Day 1761 Then Reuben winslow of Free Town Paid as a fine For a Breach of his majestys peace For Spiting in the Face of Barnebus Swift and Rubing his Ears in the Town of wareham Four Shillings to me"

"Then Stephen Bourn of Sandwich paid as a fine For a Breach of his majestys peace For Defernce with Ebenerer Swift Junr he Threw him

on The ground and Spit in his face and Poled his hare and Rubed his Ears in Wareham the sum of Four Shilings To me"

"May 23 Day 1763 Then Eliz Bump the wife of Juhn Bump Junr paid a fine of Ten Shilings to me for Burning the Daughter of Jonathan Chubback named Susanah Tho she said she did it By an axatant"

"December 5 Day 1767 then Samuel Barrows of wareham parsonly appeared and acknowledged himself Gilty of Being over Tacken with Strong Lecker and paid a fine of 5 Shilings to me"

"May 1769 then Joshuea morse personly and acknowledged him Self Gilty of prefane Swaring at Benjamin Fearings Before Josiah Carver Grand Jurey man and paid Six Shilings to me"

"Whereas William Parcker of Wareham Laborer Stands Convicted Before me John Fearing Esqre one of his majesties Justics of the pece for the County of Plymoth In a complaint by Jabez Burggs of sd wareham Cordwinder For Theft — the Damages and Corst of Proscution amounting to the sum of Two pounds Seventeen Shillings & nine pence Lawful money — & he the sd william not having any Estate To Satisfie sd Judgment I do In obediance to ye Law of this Province put bound out and Set over Ye said william to the said Jabez and to his hars or

asignes To Serve him or them the Term of one year From the Date hearof he Finding him Good and Sufficent meet & Drink Lodging & apperel During Said Term — and I do Injoin ye sd William Parcker to serve ye sd Jabez Burggs or assighns faithfully During Said Term Wittness my hand this Fiftenth Day of March Ad 1771 "

If offenders did not pay the fines imposed upon them, he could place them in the stocks, or order them to be whipped. Persons who lived disorderly, "misspending their precious time," he could send to the work-house, to the stocks, or to the whipping-post, at his discretion. He could break open doors where liquors were concealed to defraud His Majesty's excise. He could issue hue-and-cries for runaway servants and thieves. There are instances on record in which a justice of the peace issued his warrant to arrest the town minister about whose orthodoxy there were distressing rumors, and required him to be examined upon matters of doctrine and faith. But a more pleasing function of his office was to marry those who came to him for marriage, bringing the town clerk's certificate that their nuptial intentions had been proclaimed at three religious meet-

ings in the parish during the preceding fortnight. If the bride was an insolvent debtor, and it was necessary to prove that she was possessed of no goods whatever, she was married "with no more clothes on than her shift;" and this fact was certified in the justice's record.[1] For the marriage fee he claimed four shillings and gave "out of it sixpence to the town clerk," as said a law of 1716. Not always did the town clerk receive the sixpences; for the dignity of office did not hinder His Majesty's justice of the peace from practicing the parsimony of the times.

[1] "In her smock with head and foot all bare," as Chaucer wrote. Hence they were called smock marriages. According to the records of Kingston in Rhode Island, "Nathaniel Bundy took ye widow Mary Parmenter in ye highway with no other clothing but shifting or smock on ye evening of the 20th day of April 1724 and was joined together in that honorable estate of matrimony per me John Saunders, Justice." Five men were witnesses of this marriage. The same records certify, in February 1719, a ceremony in which the bridegroom "took her in Marriage after she had gone four times a cross the Highway in only her shift and hair lace and no other clothing." There was no law requiring this form of marriage; yet the minister of a town on Buzzard's Bay wrote: "September ye 5:: 1749: then did nathan Shearman take the widow mary tailor in her Shift without head Cloath and bare foot and led her a Cross the highway where two highways mett as the Law directs in such cases and was then married by me phillip taber minister of Dartmouth."

V.

THE BIRTH OF A TOWN.

AS the farmers of Agawame were separated by fifteen miles of forest from Plymouth meeting-house, they felt the need of a parish and a town government of their own. So also felt the farmers at the east end of Rochester, who, having obtained a separation from their old parish in 1734, desired to unite with those of Agawame in forming a new town. No one was active to accomplish this end until Israel Fearing went, in April, 1738, to lobby the matter with the selectmen of Plymouth. He made a second journey thither in May, carrying the petition of himself and his neighbors for a precinct. The result was so satisfactory to him that after the meeting had adjourned he treated the selectmen at an expense of three shillings, and returned at once to Agawame to prepare himself to take a petition to the legislature at Boston.

Early in the morning of the 29th of May, 1738, his mare having been newly shod and carefully saddled, Israel Fearing started on the journey to Boston. The road which he traveled was narrow and tortuous — a lane through a forest, having rocks and quagmires and long reaches of sand, which made it almost impassable to wheels, if any there were to be ventured upon it. Branches of large trees were stretched over it, so that it was unvisited by sunlight except at those places where it crossed the clearings on which a solitary husbandman had established his homestead, or where it followed the sandy shores of some of those picturesque ponds which feed the rivers emptying into Buzzard's Bay. Occasionally a deer bounded across the path, and foxes were seen running into the thickets.

The nimble mare, accustomed to such ways, carried her rider at a steady pace during the day, baiting at Scituate village, and reaching Roxbury Neck about five o'clock in the afternoon, where a stop for a half hour was made at the St. George tavern. From this elevated site the traveler saw the steeples of Boston, its harbor lively with vessels, the King's ships

riding before the town, Cambridge and the shores of the mainland in the distance. Having refreshed himself and the mare he trotted along the narrow way leading into the great town, on which the most prominent object attracting his attention was a gallows standing at the gate.

When he rode within he found in everything around him a wonderful contrast to the quiet and monotonous scenes which had always surrounded his life at Agawame. The streets were paved with cobble-stones, and were thronged with hackney-coaches, sedan-chairs, four-horse shays, and calashes, in some of which gayly dressed people were riding, the horses being driven by their negro slaves. Gentlemen on handsome saddle-horses paced by him, in comparison with whom he made a sorry figure. But he was reassured of his own manliness when he encountered a flock of sheep, and ox-carts just in from the country laden with fire-wood, fagots, and hay. He noticed with amazement the stately brick houses and their pleasant gardens, in which pear-trees and peach-trees were blooming. In the Mall, gentlemen dressed in embroidered coats, satin waistcoats, silken hose, and full

wigs, were taking an after-dinner stroll with ladies who were attired in bright silks and furbelowed scarfs, and adorned with artificial flowers and patches on their cheeks. Boston was an active, thrifty trading town ; its shops, distilleries, wind-mills, and rope-walks were all agoing ; and as he turned his mare into King Street and pulled up at the Bunch of Grapes tavern, which, being near to the Town House, was conveniently situated for the business on which he was bent, he probably felt that in such a wealthy and worldly place his simple errand would receive but little attention. At the shutting in of the evening, James Warren, an influential member of the legislature from Plymouth, came to his assistance. To him the petition was intrusted, and having paid him twenty shillings, Israel Fearing rode back to Agawame.

A precinct did not meet the public wants, and next year Ebenezer Burgess, Thomas Hamlen, and their neighbors petitioned the legislature for a town ; "finding ourselves," they said, "too small and Impotent to maintain the Public Worship of God." Israel Fearing's record of the business was this : —

"April 1738 going to the Selectmen to work the meeting for a presink one day £1–00–00

"May 1738 going to the town of plymoth with a petision two dayes Mony to treet the Select men 3 shillings

"May th29 1738 going to carey the peticion to boston one pound — and twenty shillings of mony to Cornol Woring

"March th1 day 1739 going to plymouth to Cornol Woring to fetch the Copey of the Cort for a precenk and paid to Cor Woring three shillings"

His book tells us nothing of the discussions by the farmers when he reported to them the result of his journeys across the wilderness to Boston, carrying in his saddle-bags their hopes for self-government and the shillings which they had contributed to pay the expenses of this momentous enterprise. But the book tells who his backers were, and what number of shillings each gave or promised to give to procure the act by which the plantation was converted to a town. Here is the list: —

"Recevd to goo with the petion of my
own mony . . . . . 10 shillings
and of mr John Eles 05
and of mr Joshua gibbes 05
and of mr Samuel buerg 05

and of mr thomas bates the promas of 05 shillings
and of mr Ebnezer beese 04
and of mr Ebnezer Swift the promas of 05
and of mr Uriah Savery 05
and of mr Jirey Swift 05
and of mr micah gibbes . . . . . 05"

Governor Belcher signed the act incorporating the town July 10, 1739, and was soon after removed from office. He was succeeded by Governor Shirley, who, ambitious of royal favor and thinking that the number of towns was increasing too rapidly, determined that Wareham should be the last "until His Majesty's pleasure shall be known."

The little town then became the text for a correspondence between the governor and the British ministry, the object of which was to establish the right of the King of England to limit the number of representatives in the colonial legislature. The governor wrote to London that an increase in the number of towns was an increase of representatives; that the present number of these men "hath been sufficient to embarrass His Majesty's Government here," and, taking the act incorporating the town of Wareham as an illustration of the facility with which towns had been

created, he proposed "to prevent the further increase of representatives" by refusing to give his assent to any act incorporating a new town or dividing an old one until it had been approved by the King.

But if His Majesty had inquired of the farmers of Wareham, who had so sparingly counted out their shillings to Israel Fearing, he would have learned that they had no money to give for the expenses of a representative at Boston, and that they never had desired to be represented there.

The town having been incorporated, the next thing for the farmers to do was to hold a town meeting.

VI.

THE TOWN'S MIND.

THE object of all town meetings was "to know the Town's Mind;" whether it was for doing this, or for doing that, or for doing something else. In the warrants it was written with capital letters, and was alluded to as if it were a distinguished person, slow to act, and to be consulted on every matter, small and great. On the sixth day of August, 1739, the Town's Mind of Wareham, of the County of Plymouth, of the Province of Massachusetts Bay, was summoned for the first time "to make Choice of a town Clark and all other town officers."

The town clerk recorded in the town book the decisions of the Town's Mind. In the same book he recorded births, marriages, and deaths; transfers of pews in the meeting-house; descriptions of articles lost and found; of estrays taken up, as "a Reed Stray Hefar

two years old and she hath sum white In the face." Here he also recorded the marks by which farmers identified their cattle, although the reader of the records may suppose that they were the marks by which farmers themselves were identified. For example: "Joshua Brigs mark Is a Scware Crop In the under side of ye Right ear;" "Thomas Whittens mark Is a mackrels tales In Both Ears."

There is no romance in the clerk's annals; they deal only with such facts as interested the townspeople, who were accustomed to think more about their woodlands, crops, cattle, and salt marshes than about anything else. It must be confessed that, important man as he was, he did not always write the records in a scholarly style nor in a readable hand. He was frugal-minded. His closely written lines, running zigzag like a rail fence across the pages, reveal a desire to be saving of the book, and the formation of his words shows that no extravagance could be allowed in the use of the alphabet. The Wareham book testifies that one of the qualifications of candidates for this office was an entire want of skill to write the English language correctly; a want which sore beset the men and women

of colonial New England, notwithstanding the compulsory school laws.

In the judgment of the Town's Mind the honors of the clerk's office were a fair compensation for its labors; he was elected to serve for nothing; as, in 1761, "maid chois of Beniamin Fearing Town Clarck for the year Insuing without fees from ye Town and he Excepted." Sometimes the clerk was granted a small amount of money, to be raised by a general tax, that he might piece out the fees allowed him by law for special work, called in the vernacular "the Proffites of the Townes Bookes;" for example, Rochester town, in 1711, "agreed with Peter Blackmer that twenty shillings in money should be raised by Rate to satisfie him for keeping of the town Booke for about eleven years past."

The treasurer of the town did not fare so well. A province law declared that he should have "such allowance for his services as the town shall agree to;" and when he was elected the Town's Mind agreed to allow him nothing. For example: 1745, "chose Samuel Burge Town treasurer and he is to Serve the Town for Love and good will." After a time

six shillings a year — or "sex shelangs," as the clerk of the period wrote it — were allowed the treasurer for his services, and in 1780 his salary was increased to ten dollars. This extravagance can be accounted for by the fact that the paper currency of the country was at that time almost worthless; silver coins were scarce, and farm products, such as grain, wool, flax, and meats, were their only equivalents in trade and barter. The ten paper dollars paid to the treasurer in 1780 were not worth more than the "sex shelangs" of peaceful times, which, by the province laws of 1749, had been made equal to a Spanish milled dollar.

In addition to the clerk and the treasurer, the town's officers annually chosen were numerous. Some of them were authorized by legislative enactments and some by custom only. There were men "to make up accounts" with the treasurer; others to perambulate the boundaries; one "able man," called in the records the "Clark of the markit," to affix the town's seal to all weights and measures found to be true according to the standards sent out of England in the reign of William and Mary, and to destroy

the false. To enable this officer to do his duty fairly, the town bought a London set of "wates and mesuers," as the clerk wrote it, at a cost of ten pounds.

Good orthodox leather was considered to be a prime necessity, like orthodox preaching, and therefore men were chosen, who by authority of law stamped the town's mark upon all leather well and sufficiently tanned or curried; and who seized all unstamped and defective leather offered for sale, whether it had been worked up or not. And as no man was allowed to make his own theology, so none was allowed to make his own leather, unless he was skilled in what the law styled "the feat or mystery of a tanner;" and if so skilled he was prohibited from exercising any other trade.

There were fence-viewers chosen to adjust controversies between the owners of adjoining lands. There were inspectors of highways and bridges. There were inspectors of rivers, who were sworn to secure to shad and alewives a free passage up and down the town's streams. Once a year they came before His Majesty's justice of the peace and took an oath to look after the welfare of the fish, who recorded the fact as follows: —

"March the 22 day 1756 Insign Swift and Ebenezer Brigs hath taken ye oath Taking Care of the Ale wives not Being Stoped from going up the Revers to cast their Sporns before me John Fearing."

There were hog-reeves, to see that when hogs went abroad they wore rings in their noses, and yokes of the regulation size on their necks. The law called them meet persons; they were unpopular, as they made fees by using their authority to seize swine found without a keeper, a yoke, a tethering line, or snout rings, "so as to prevent damage by rooting." Benjamin Smith, of Taunton, sent a petition to the Massachusetts Legislature, in December, 1722: "Shewing That being the Hog Reve of the said Town He suffered much in the Execution of that Office, And Praying that this Court would determine Whether his Oath is not a good & lawful Evidence Though he be Hog Reve." When, in later times, as swine became less numerous, the office became a sinecure, the popular candidate for it was usually the last bridegroom in the town.

Two tything-men, called in the vernacular "tidymen," were chosen from those who

were supposed to be prudent and discreet. Every incumbent of this office had need of prudence and discretion, for, although he no longer, as in earlier times, took "the charge of ten or twelve Familyes of his Neibourhood" to "diligently inspect them," he was required to watch licensed houses of entertainment, and to make complaint of all disorders and misdemeanors discovered therein. As he reported to His Majesty's justice of the peace all idle persons, "prophane swearers or cursers Sabath breakers and the like offenders," his presence in the tavern, the shop, or the store, was a signal for silence and sobriety.

Because, said a province law, "bundles of shingles are mark'd for a greater number than what they contain," two skillful men were chosen to see that neighbors did not cheat each other in trading for lumber. Then, there was a town gauger, appointed to gauge and mark all casks of rum and molasses exposed for sale. The necessity for this officer grew out of the "total depravity" of His Majesty's good subjects, in whose casks and hogsheads, said the law of 1718, "there hath been wanting seven or eight gallons and

sometimes more which persons are obliged to pay for."

As military service was compulsory upon men between sixteen and sixty years of age, the town had its militia company and members of the county horse troop; and a military clerk, who four times a year listed all persons required by law to bear arms and attend musters. He collected fines from those who failed to answer the roll-calls on training days. Those who did not pay the fines were punished by being made to lie neck and heels together, or to ride the wooden horse.

Other officers of the town were a cattle-pound keeper, who lived by fees; a sheep-yarder, who yarded stray sheep, "if they be not badgd," from December to March, at two-pence a head and expenses of keeping; a man "to Tack care of the meeting House and Sweep the Saim," and "to keep the dores & windows shet." Wardens were chosen, "to Inspect ye meeting Hous on ye Lord's Day and see to Good Order among ye Boys;" for it was customary to separate children from their parents, to place them together in uncomfortable seats, and to set inspectors over them. If they were discovered laughing or

playing during the time of public worship, the wardens complained of them to His Majesty's justice of the peace, who inflicted punishment according to law. Gamekeepers were annually chosen, whose duty was to prevent the untimely killing of deer, or hunting them when they were imprisoned in corries by deep snows. The town clerk said in his records that they are "To Bee the men for Prevesation of the Deare for the yeare Insuing."

The office of constable was of high reputation, and, as in old Saxon times, so now, it was intended that only those should have it who were "honest and able men both in body and estate and not of the meaner sort." Every constable, said a Plymouth Colony law, "shall have a Black Staffe tip't with Brasse as a Badge of his office which as he hath opportunity he shall take with him when he goeth to discharge any part of his office." He was therefore popularly known by the irreverent as tipstaff. He gathered the taxes allotted for general expenses of the town, and those allotted for support of the minister. The warrant for town meeting was addressed to him by the selectmen. It ran: "In his

Majesties name to Require you to notifie the Freeholders and other inhabitants Quallified as the Law Directs to vote in Town Meeting that they meet and assemble themselves together at the meeting House to know the Town's Mind" in regard to the various questions stated in the warrant. This document was copied in the town book to establish the authenticity of the meeting; and the constable therein certified that he had notified the inhabitants "by setting up the warrant at the meeting House," by which he meant that he had nailed it upon the principal door of that building, where everybody could read it on Sunday.

No one sought the office of constable, but whoever was elected was required to accept it, or to pay the fine fixed by law for refusing to take the oath. In 1751 a town meeting was adjourned six times to elect men who would consent to take the constable's oath of office, and David Besse was chosen to prosecute "delinquent constables" on behalf of the town. It was necessary for the Town's Mind to be lenient in dealing with this antipathy to the office; therefore the fine imposed upon Benjamin Fearing "for being delinquent in

the office of constable" was remitted on condition that he procured a substitute. In 1752 Butler Wing, being elected constable, refused to serve; whereupon he was prosecuted, and he gave his promissory note for the amount of the fine. He appealed repeatedly to be excused from the debt; but the Town's Mind was unmoved, and in 1755 it directed the clerk to enter upon the book its decision, that it would "not a Bate mr Butler Wing any Part of the money that he gave a note for for his Refusing to Sarve in the office of Constable when chosen by the Town in ye year 1752." The sequel of this matter is found in the town treasurer's records of 1756, viz.: "I have Reseved a fine paid by Butler Wing for not Sarving Constable in the Town of Wareham 2 pounds 14 Shillings."

Of all the town officers the selectmen were chief. There were three of them chosen annually to direct prudential affairs, holding sessions at the tavern, where they usually sat the day out, having the town clerk at hand to record their orders, served with victuals and grog at the town's cost, and regarded by their host with a respect due to servants of the King. They prepared business for the town

meetings and nominated town officers for election. They looked up undesirable residents and were active (to quote the records of 1767) in "worning Pepel oot of Town." In 1768 they sent Jeams Baker out of town at a cost of fifteen shillings; Nathan Bump was exported at a cost of six shillings; eight shillings were paid for carrying away "a black child;" and Elisha Burgess received twenty shillings for carting out a whole family. Rams were in higher favor than these friendless sojourners. They had the freedom of the town until 1781, when it was ordered that they "shall be taken in" by the 1st of September. But as they continued to stand at the street corners, the Town's Mind rose in anger, and declared that "if a Ram goes at large the owner shall pay a dollar to him that takes up said Ram."

The selectmen offered to the town meeting a variety of subjects for consideration. Some related to the extermination of foxes, crows, and other farm pests; to the protection of oyster fishing; to the catching and selling of alewives; to the acceptance of highways and the building of bridges; to repairs of the meeting-house; to the minister's salary and

the ministry lands; to the herding of sheep and yoking of hogs on the commons; to such questions as "what amount of money is to be raised for defraying necessary expenses;" whether the town "will have a school this year;" or will choose a representative at the Great and General Court appointed to be convened for His Majesty's service in Boston; or will make new irons for the town stocks; or a new whipping-post. Some measures discussed were medical, as "not to have Small Pox set up by Inoculation;" some were convivial, as "To pay Joshua Gibbs for two bowls of Grog" drunk while on the town's service; some were pathetic, as "voted for makeing a Coffen for Alice Reed ten shillings — for her Winding Sheat three and four pence — for digging her grave three shillings;" to pay "the Wido Debre Savery for Fethers she Put in Jemima Wing's bed when Sick Six Shillings;" to pay "Six Shillings to Sam[ll] Savery for his Trouble and care of John Pennerine." This last-named beneficiary was one of a large number of poor, ignorant, and superstitious peasants, prisoners from Acadia, kin of Evangeline and Gabriel Lajeunesse, who were billeted upon the towns of Massachu-

setts by orders of the royal Governor and Council, like the following, dated 1757: "To remove John Pelerine Wife and Children, supposed to be Five in Number a Family of French Neutrals to the Town of Wareham, and that the Select Men of the Town of Wareham be and hereby are directed to receive them and provide for them."

Alice Reed, whose coffin, winding-sheet, and grave thus cost the town sixteen shillings and four pence, had been one of the town's poor, annually put out by the selectmen to be kept at public expense. How to dispose of such people was a subject which periodically exercised the Town's Mind, and it was doubtless a consolation to know that some of the oaths and curses uttered in public had been turned by His Majesty's justice of the peace into shillings for their benefit, as the law directed. They began to call for support in 1746, when the town paid £12 for keeping "Jane Bump so called with victuals and cloaths." The next year she was returned to the selectmen, who, not knowing what to do with her, pressed the town "to do Sumthing for ye Support of Geen Bump." In 1754 appeared the widow Reliance Bumpus, who

placed her whole reliance upon the town treasury for twenty years. A short time before she had enjoyed a merited credit with her neighbors, in regard to which the old account-book testifies as follows: "November ye 24 1751 ye widow Reliance bumpus Dr for 16 pounds of porck 1 bushall of corn and 1 gallon of malases and 1 pound of Ches" — "July 1752 Reconed with Relyanc bumpus and all accounts balanced." Her widowhood was soon followed by poverty, and then she turned to the selectmen for help. John Bishop, the town clerk, says: —

"When the votable inhabitance convened in His Majesties name September 24, 1754 John Bumpus ye 3d Came Into ye meeting and maid the offer ye town that he would Keep ye widow Reliance Bumpus one year Kuming for six Pounds Thirteen Shillings and four Pence Lawfull money and ye Mordarator Put it to vote to know ye Mind of ye town whether they ware willing to allow ye sd Jno Bumpus ye 3d the money he asked to keep ye aforesd widow one year and ye vote Past in the Affarmative."

Thus the poor widows Bump and Bumpus, descendants of Edward Bompasse, who came to Plymouth in the little ship "Fortune" from

London in 1621, secured a place in recorded history. Many poor widows achieved the same distinction, and became their companions at the public crib. A warrant for a town meeting in 1757 stated a wish "To know the Towns Mind whether they will do anything for the Support of Sarah Chubbuck it being the Desire of her Brother Benjamin" —a request which suggests that family pride in this respect was not a virtue universally appreciated. In the same year others joined the poor widows' band, among whom was Jane George, who became famous inasmuch as she participated in its joys and sorrows for fifty years.

The prices at which the poor widows were farmed out varied annually, but in 1770 their value was uniform at £3 each *per annum*, taken as they ran. Their keeping was so profitable, in services rendered by them, as to induce the town to vote repeatedly "Not to build a poor-house," and a convenient plan for disposing of them was adopted: it was to sell them at auction. At a town meeting in 1776 it was voted, "to vandue the Widow Lovell." She was accordingly set up by the selectmen, and, as the records state, "was

L. of C.

struck of to Josiah Stevens for to keep one year for the Sum of nine pounds Six shillings & if She did not live the year in he to have in that proportion." But she lived "the year in," and continued to appear at the annual auction. In 1782 the town voted to buy her a shirt, and then sold her again. After transfers to various homes, her death is disclosed in this record of September, 1784: "Voted for a winding sheet and a shift for the Widow Lovell eight shillings." And that was the end of her. But Jane George lived on, and into the next century, surviving all her numerous contemporaries. She began to be one of the town's poor in 1757; she was set up at vendue for the last time in 1808, when, before she passed from the public stage, dilapidated as she undoubtedly was, the town voted to pay "for Extra Mending Jane George four dollars."

Not every one who came to town meeting was allowed to vote there. The laws of 1692 described qualified voters as owners of real estate in fee simple, and "inhabitants who are ratable at twenty pounds estate." In 1743 the laws compelled voters to be personally present at the meeting, and all could

vote on town matters who had a ratable estate of £20 value in the town; but at the election of a representative to the Great and General Court at Boston, only those could vote who owned a landed estate yielding an annual income of forty shillings "at the least." This qualification was fixed by the charter of William and Mary, and it is worthy of note that the same ruled in the town of Kingston-upon-Hull, incorporated in the year 1439 by Henry VI, "To remedy the great evils arising from the elections being made by outrageous and excessive numbers of people dwelling in the counties, most part of small substance, pretending to have a voice equivalent to the most worthy knights and esquires."

The colonial town meeting was a primary and not a representative assembly; the law declared that "no matter or thing shall be voted or determined but what is inserted in the warrant" for calling it. As it recognized no distinction of persons, disorders were frequent. A law of 1715 gave special powers to the moderator because, as the law said, "by reason of the disorderly carriage of some persons in said meetings the business

thereof is very much retarded and obstructed." And it was sometimes necessary, when weighty matters were to be considered, to make a registry of the names of those who had a title to vote; as in September, 1774, when the Boston Port Bill was in force, the town of Wareham chose a committee "to join with the selectmen to make out a list and say who should vote in town meeting."

In many respects the colonial town meeting — always held in the meeting-house — resembled the parish meeting of Old England, always held in the nave of the church. The selectmen, as trustees of the town, administered its income and rendered an account of receipts and expenses to the annual town meeting; so the churchwardens, as trustees of the parish, rendered their account of receipts and expenses to the annual meeting of parishioners; and in each place discussions ensued on any important measures done or proposed by the trustees. The accounts of the "Chyrchewardens of North Elmham," from the year 1539 to the year 1577, show payments of money, for the welfare of the town, identical in character

with payments made two hundred years later by the selectmen of Wareham. When a bridge was to be built the churchwardens hired a woodcutter to fell an oak-tree in the park, then a sawyer to saw the oak into timbers, then a digger to dig a pit under the felled oak, for the run of the saw. All this is told in the Chyrchwarden's accounts :—

— "A. D. 1545 payed to Roger Hamonde for felling of an ocke in ye peke for ye mendying of ye brydge by Rudds . . 3d.
payed to Robert Barchham for ye sawying of ye Tree wherewith was made ye brydge by Rudds . . . . . 7s. 8d.
payed for ye makying of a pytt to saw ye seyd tree . . . . . 4d."

The churchwardens paid, as did the Wareham selectmen, for making a "payer of towne stocks;" for carting gravel to mend "ye noysome wayes within ye town;" for "foxes heades according to ye statute and polecattes and a wild cattes hed." In the year 1546 they paid for "makying of ye Chyrche door keye & mending of ye locke;" and likewise, in the year 1748, did the selectmen of Wareham pay "for a lock and kee for ye meeting hous."

VII.

IMPRESSMENTS FOR THE KING.

LESS than two years had passed, after the organization of the town, when warrants to impress men into the King's military and naval service were received by the captain of the town's militia company. Impressment was not a new thing. A line written on the inside of the cover of Israel Fearing's book reads: "May the 26 in 1707 I was preesed to the casel for 6 mounth;" referring to his impressment into Queen Anne's military service at "her majesty's Castle William" on Castle Island in Boston harbor; which fortification was at that time garrisoned by "impressing men's sons and servants every spring."

Impressment was a grievance, and yet there was a plenty of law for it. Although it had not been directly authorized by act of Parliament, it was recognized as lawful in-

asmuch as there were acts which made provision for the exemption of certain persons from impressment to which they would otherwise have been subject. Moreover the earliest laws of Massachusetts provided for "Impresses" of laborers, cattle, goods, soldiers, and sailors; and the way to do it was described by the Great and General Court from time to time during the entire period of colonial legislation. The laws authorized impressments of laborers and artificers for public works; of goods and cattle for public service; of sailors and soldiers from the militia for wars conducted by act of the colonial legislature. They exempted from impressments men who were suffering from "any natural or personal impediment, as want of years, greatness of years, defect of minde, failing of senses, or impotency of limbs." Members of the Provincial Council, representatives at the Great and General Court and judges of assize, while in office, were allowed by the law of 1704 to "enjoy the priviledge of having one son or servant exempted and freed from all impresses."

Each person liable to impressment was required to appear himself or by a substitute

at the time and place appointed, on pain of suffering imprisonment, unless he paid down within two hours the fine fixed by law. Those who paid the fine or who procured substitutes were to be "esteemed as persons that have served." Soldiers were impressed for the Indian wars as well as for wars in the succeeding century; and extraordinary favors were sometimes expected by those who returned home after having served their King in this compulsory manner.[1]

There was of course a natural desire to escape impressments, and it was favored by physicians' certificates of inability to serve, which were easily obtained. These means, employed "by divers persons fit and able for service," were described by the legislature as "corrupt and fallacious" certificates written by "some practitioners in chirurgery." Many who failed to get the fallacious certificates ran away. The laws, having recited the fact that "the ablest and fittest for service have absconded and hid themselves from the im-

[1] Sept. 6, 1746, Barnabas Bates and Ebenezer Perry, Jr., asked, in town meeting, to be excused "from paying Rates the Ensuing year by Reason of their being on the Expedition at Cape Britton the Last year." — *Wareham Records.*

press," gave authority to public officers to pursue the fugitives, and to levy a tax of five pounds upon their "body goods or chattels."

As Massachusetts by the charter of William and Mary had power to enact such laws only as were "not repugnant or contrary to the Lawes of this our Realme of England," it is to be presumed that all impressment laws of the province were of this character. But they were often executed in a despotic manner. In 1757 the Provincial Council directed the sheriff of Suffolk County "to Impress Thirty Seamen for Manning the Snow Prince of Wales as soon as may be;" and in 1759 the General Court authorized the captain general "to impress out of the inward bound Vessels so many Seamen as to make up the Compliment of Men to compleat the number allowed to man the Ship King George." The inhabitants of Boston frequently protested against the "oppressive manner before unknown to Englishmen and attended with tragical consequences," in which impressment warrants were executed. It could be said of the officers of the law that, like Falstaff, they "misused the King's press most damnably," thereby causing riots,

and compelling the governor to promise that impressments should be stopped.

There was reason for the farmers of Wareham to be alarmed when the King's ship (or snow) came up Buzzard's Bay in 1741, and again in 1742, and sent warrants to the captain of the militia to impress men into the King's service. Although some took to the woods, none offered resistance. In Israel Fearing's book are written the names of his townsmen who were impressed at various times between the years 1740 and 1748, to assist in carrying on the wars of England against France and Spain: —

"April, 1740 Robert Bese impresed and Nathan Brigg's man; and Nathan Briggs gave Robert Bese fifteen pounds old tener for half a man and Robert Bese went to the Estward.

"May 1741 Josiah Cunit Impresed to go on bord ye snow And he Recived ten pounds in mony.

"And Edward Bump paid him 5 pounds for his sons.

"And John bump y^{e} 3 two pounds.

"And After hadawa two pounds for his sun.

"And Joseph doty one pound for his sun.

"March 1742 Joshua bese Impresed to go on

bord y^e^ sno and Joseph Landers paid 4 pounds for his son to him.

"March 1743 Noah bump Imprest for his magests sarvis and Runaway.

"June 1744 Jonathan bump Jun^r^ Impresed and Samuel peary for his magist sarvis and they both went to the Est frontters.

"March 1745 Oliver Nores impresed and Run away and Joseph doty Jun and Run away Edward bump impresed and Joshua bump. And barnabas bates and these 3 went in his magest sarvis to cap britan.

"June 1745. Ebenezer peary Jun and Jonathan bump Junr Listed for cap britten and I gave them fouer pounds apeace old tener.

"Jabez bensen was Impresed and went to y^e^ Estward.

"Joshua Gibbes Jun Impresed and paul Rament and paul Rament Recived twenty pouns old tener and If Either of these are Impresed the other is to Apear and go Into his magestys sarvis or Else to give 20 pounds old tener.

"July 1746 biniamin Chubback Impresed and gave Noah bump twenty pounds old ten to goo half for him.

"Samuel peary and Noah bump impresed to go to the Westward frunttery and Samuel peary Received 40 pounds old ten 20 pounds of John bushap for his sonn and ten pounds of Jorg Whit and ten pounds of Joh gibbes

"Sepr 1746 Jonathan Chubback Jun Impresed for Zeccues Bump At five pounds old ten Joseph Giford Jun presed at five pounds and ten shillings old tener for Edward bump to goo in his magty sarves.

"March 1748 Judah Swift and Joseph doty and Edward Rayment Imprest and hired Robart bese for 55 pounds."

The record shows that these men were equipped for the service on which they were going with muskets, halberds, drums, and the royal ensign; and that opportunity was given them to buy substitutes, to obtain compensation, and even to run away.

VIII.

THE TOWN'S MEETING-HOUSE.

IT stood on the common where the flagstaff now stands, a plain square building, stained silver-gray by the sun and rains. On its front side there was a porch, on top of its front gable there was a little turret, and over the turret, on a stumpy rod, whirled a whale-shaped wind-vane. The turret and the vane gave to the building an air of humble respectability. Around it were a few oak-trees, outposts of the primeval forest which extended behind it to the shore of the bay, a mile distant. In front was the principal highway of the region, called by the earliest settlers "ye contry rode." It was along this way that Englishmen of Plymouth drove their cattle to the Mattapoiset necks to be wintered, as long ago as the year 1655, and over the same path English soldiers traveled in 1676 to attack the Indian King Philip. A

way branched from it to some meadows and houses on Cromeset Neck; where three chimney stacks may yet be seen, in the woods, the only relics of those seaside homes of the parish. The Woonkinco River was so near the meeting-house that the hum of its grist-mill could have been heard above the voice of the preacher in the pulpit, if the miller had been allowed to run his grindstones on Sunday. Beyond the river was that stretch of verdant meadows which had given the name of Fresh-meadow Village to the small settlement in the neighborhood.

The Agawame planters began to build the meeting-house in the year 1735. It was a private undertaking by a few farmers, who got their sustenance from the soil and from the sea, their clothing from sheep's wool carded and spun at home, and who, for trade, made tar and gathered turpentine in the pine forests. As times were hard, because the current paper-money of the province was almost valueless, the undertaking dragged heavily on their hands. Four years later they were glad to turn it over to their new-made town, which immediately levied a tax upon them wherewith to finish it. In the

records the tax was called "the meeting hous Rat." Some paid the "Rat" with labor, some paid it with lumber, some with nails wrought in the home smithies, some with farm products which were exchanged for labor; for example, Uriah Savery gave "76 pounds of beef toward building ye meeting hous at 6 pence a pound."

As soon as it was habitable for public worship the town appointed agents "to sell ye Spots for Pues," and chose two serious men to police the Sunday services. It was the duty of these men to watch all playful boys and girls, especially boys, whom the elders of Duxbury had publicly stigmatized as "the wretched boys on the Lord's day." By common opinion they were regarded as an annoyance to the minister and an offense to the gravity of the town.

It was a small meeting-house, but it had more than one door, as appears from the election of a man to sweep it "and unlock the Doores." It was customary in those times not only to separate men from women and boys from girls in seating the congregation, but to provide separate doors for them; therefore the little house had a great door for men

on its front, and two small doors on opposite sides, of which one was for women and the other was probably for symmetry.

The sweeping and the locking it were subjects which exercised the Town's Mind annually; and although the doorkeeper's emolument had been twenty-five shillings old tenor a year, which was equivalent to nearly two dollars in silver, the town was willing to pay more for a better service. It is recorded that, at a town meeting in 1747, "Ye modarater Pute to vote whether the town would Give Sam[ll] Savery forty Shillings old teener to Sweep and keep the kee of the meeting hous ye Insuing year and It Past In in the affearmitive and ye sd Sam[ll] accepted."

But in 1748 the said Samuel was no longer the town's doorkeeper. The compensation was increased to sixty shillings, and Ichabod Samson was chosen for the service. Instead of keeping the key he lost it, compelling the selectmen to put into the tax levy seven shillings and sixpence "for a Lock and kee for ye meeting hous." Notwithstanding this loss Ichabod continued in charge; but in 1754 his meagre salary was cut down. There was some reason for the cutting: the Great

and General Court at Boston had established a silver currency, and shillings were worth more than they had been. Besides, he had begun to show that carelessness in the discharge of his duties which a long tenure of office is apt to beget. He had neglected to use his broom, and had fallen into the habit of locking people in the meeting-house on Sundays, or of locking them out of it; for a town meeting gave him positive orders "To open ye dores & shutt them when wanted," and it directed him to sweep the house once a month, the general expectation being that he was to sweep it "so often as there shalbe ocation to keep it deesent."

It needed a great deal of sweeping. There were days when the doors were swinging open, inviting all wandering sheep, dogs, and boys to explore it. Children played in it on Sunday noons, if the warden was out of sight, thereby "Prophanning the Sabbath in the Intermission Season," as the elders said; while the latter ate luncheons there, smoked tobacco, and scattered trash upon the floor without "prophanning" the place at all. It was used for town meetings and for elections, at which times boys climbed into the pulpit

and imagined themselves to be ministers. In its loft were stored the town's drum, halberds, muskets, ammunition, and the British colors which had been carried in the French and Indian wars, and were always flaunted through the town by the train-band on training days.[1]

Notwithstanding these uses of the meeting-house, the people had some regard for it. When the adjacent common became a dumping ground for superfluous stones and a market-place for firewood, they ordered that no stones shall be dumped nor wood piled in front of it. When the rains leaked into it,

[1] It is worth while to note the vulgar uses to which churches (or meeting-houses) were sometimes put in England in the 17th century, as showing that the carelessness and disrespect in which these edifices were held by New England colonists were inherited from Old England. In Bedford, as related in Brown's *Life and Times of John Bunyan*, a man got into trouble for "folding some sheep in the church during a snow storm;" a woman for "hanginge her lynnen in the church to dry." The curate of the parish was presented in 1612 for baiting a bear in the church at Woburn; the church wardens of Knotting and their sons and the rector, because they "permitted and were present at cock fightings in the chancell;" and the rector of Carlton, because "immediately before service he did lead his horse in at the south doore into the chancell of the church where he sett him and there continued all the time of said service and sermon."

they voted to put "some scattering shinggles on the roof." Once they bought a pulpit "cushing." In 1764 they altered "the front Gallery so the men has the whole of it to Set in;" and in 1767 they appropriated four pounds, equivalent to thirteen dollars and thirty-three cents, "for Doing ye meeting hous and for a Suppolidge," — whatever that strange thing may have been. Moreover, His Majesty's justice of the peace, a rugged farmer whose loyalty to the King was bred in his bones, fined all boys and girls who laughed in it during the time of worship. This worthy opened his court records in 1755 with these writings: —

"Deborah Bergs hath paid me as a fine for Lafing in the Wareham meeting house on the Sabarth day In the time of Publick Devine Sarvice By the hand of Ebnezer Brigs 5 Shillings"

"Hanah Elis hath paid me as a fine for Breach of Sabath for Lafing in the meeting house on the Lords Day In the time of Devine Sarvice By the hand of Rholand Benson 5 Shillings"

Everybody in the town, whether living near the meeting-house or far from it, went to the Sunday services. A celebrated petition to

the King, in 1731, from the rector of the Church of England in Boston, "most humbly informs your Majesty that it is very common for the people in New England to go ten or fifteen miles to Church." This custom filled the seats of the Wareham meeting-house so full that some worshipers must bring chairs, which they placed wherever there was an open space on the floor. The chairs became an annoyance to the pew-owners, the aristocracy of the place, who in 1757 got an order from the town "to clear the Alleys of the meeting Hous of chairs and all other Incumbrances." Whether the ousted worshipers stood during the services thereafter, or seated themselves on doorsteps and window sills, the records say not.

Religion filled a large space in the thoughts and in the laws of the province.[1] The laws

[1] A prolonged observance of the Sabbath continued to be the custom in New England until the influence of railroads broke it up.

"I remember being despatched when a lad one Saturday afternoon in the winter, to bring home a few bushels of apples engaged of a farmer a mile distant; how the careful exact man looked first at the clock, then out of the window at the sun, and turning to me said: 'I cannot measure out the apples in time for you to get home before sundown; you must come again Monday.'"—*Rev. Horace Bushnell*, at Litchfield, Conn., in 1851.

directed that the Sabbath time shall begin at the going-down of Saturday's sun and shall continue through the evening of Sunday. On Saturday evening the usual labors of the household were suspended, and when Sunday dawned preparations were made to go to the meeting-house. Then traveling and walking afield were forbidden. To travel was not to pass from one town to another only; it was also passing from house to house in the village. His Majesty's justice of the peace was within the instructions of the law when he wrote in his book: —

"May th 10 Day 1769 then Parsonly appeared Japhath washburn and acknowledged himself Gilty of a Breach of Sabbath In traveling From my hous onto Zaphanier Bumps on the 16 Day of april on a arond To Git Benjamin Benson to worck for him and he hath paid Ten Shillings as a Fine To me John Fearing Justis of peace"

Nor can the hay be winrowed on Sunday, nor may children pick apples in the orchards. The same justice wrote in his book: —

"September th 5 Day 1772 personly appeared william Estes and acknowledged him Self Gilty of Racking hay on The First Day of the week or Lords Day and paid Fine Ten Shillings to me"

"July th 27 1774 then Elizabeth Mosse paid Five Shillings For her son Job for a breach of Sabath for puling aples in Benjamin Fearing's orchard complained of by Ebenezer Swift warden to me"

Religion was also the romance of the people. The humor and pathos of Bunyan's story depicting the progress of his pilgrims from this world to that which is to come touched all hearts. It was the delight of their imagination, in the Sunday twilights, to follow Christian and Hopeful while they crossed the Inchanted Ground, and, entering the Land of Beulah, "whose air was very sweet and pleasant," journeyed on to the Celestial City; for many believed that they were going thither by the same way.

To such a people, going to the meeting-house for divine worship was a duty; to be there was a social pleasure by which the duty was enforced. The intermission between the forenoon and the afternoon service furnished opportunity for greetings to those who, living on almost impassable roads, had not seen each other during the preceding six days. Many things were to be talked about, some of which were suggested by announcements tacked upon the great door of the meeting-house.

There they read, as from an old newspaper, of an intention of marriage between persons known to everybody; and although the town-clerk had stood up in the congregation and screamed it at the top of his voice, it was an endless subject for comment, especially if the woman had as publicly renounced the intention — as women sometimes did. There they read of a sale at outcry to come off during the week, and the wise ones were asked to foretell how much the property would fetch, and to explain why it was to be sold. They read of stray cattle lost or found, of a trinket picked up on the highway, of the last bounty offered for a fox's head, of taxes due, of a whaling sloop about to sail and would take a green hand, of a townsman going to Boston, of the next town meeting, and they threshed out the questions there to be voted upon. These Sunday noon gatherings, which were not unlike the meetings of a village club, supplied not only news and gossip, but also opportunities for a trade or a barter not to be neglected.

Thus the Sundays came and went for thirty years, when it appeared that the large congregation must have a larger meeting-

house; and the town having refused to build it, preferring to patch out the old one, a few townsmen undertook the building. Although there had been migrations to Connecticut during these years, the town had retained the natural increase of its population, save what part death and the King's impress had carried away. There were more farms, more sheep and neat cattle, more sloops going to sea, and a more general prosperity than there had been. A forge had been set up in the woods to work iron ore dug from bogs and ponds; the schoolmaster had become a part of the community; and the political strifes in Boston had hardly been heard of.

The new meeting-house was set up "Nigh where the old meeting-house now stands," as the location of the land given for it is described in the conveyance, dated "March 16th in the tenth year of his Majesties reign annoque Domini 1770." No barrels of rum were tapped at its raising, because it was a private undertaking, to be done without waste. The farmers who built it followed the architectural style of the old house; they knew no other style, and used a part of the old materials in the new building. They

were to repay themselves for their expenses from the sales of pews, the deeds of which ran in very unscholastic language, showing how destitute of a school education these town fathers had been when they were boys.[1]

Near the new meeting-house was Benjamin Fearing's inn, which in the early part of the century had been the dwelling-house of Isaac Bumpus, the miller. He had been a prom-

[1] "We the Subscribers Major part of the Commity Chosen by Subscribers of the New Meeting hous in Wareham to build for them said Meeting hous agreabell to thear articales Subscribed to and to give to them a Tittle of thear pew or pewes theay shall Drow by Lott and it appearing to ous that John Fearing Esquire of Wareham haith Subscribed and paid to ous the following Sumes to Wit the Sum of Sixteen poundes and the Sum of Six pounds Eleven shillings and Six pence for the Building said Meeting hous and a further Sum of four poundes Eight shillings for a pew he Boght of ous at publick Veandew ————————————

We Do In ower Capacety Intitle to him the said John Fearing Esq^{r}. of Wareham the following pewes which he Drew by Lott and Chose and that he Boght beeing Numbered ass foloweth to wit one N°. 31 another N°. 54 and the other N°. 43 To him the said John Fearing Esquire his heirs and assigns soo Long as Shall be thought proper by the said proprity of Wareham to Continue said Meet Hous

Wareham June ye 4: 1774.

Barnabas Bates, Eben^{zr}, Briggs, Josiah Carver, Samuel Savery } Commity of The New Meeting Hous"

inent man in the work of organizing the town, was chosen town treasurer, and in 1739 was appointed by the church to settle with Deacon Hamlen, as the records state, "to see how he had disposed of ye contributions." But the tables were turned when, in 1747, the town "Chose Decon John Ellis to Prosecute Isaac Bump for ye money that Is due from sd Bump to the Town," which he had collected while he was its treasurer.[1]

There were no stage-coaches to pull up at the inn, but travelers on horseback from Plymouth and Cape Cod, and those coming by sloops from Nantucket and the Vineyard, rested there. Its bar-room was a crowded resort on town-meeting days; there the militia captain had his headquarters on training days, and all the year it was the home of the town's municipal business, —

> "Where village statesmen talk'd with looks profound,
> And news much older than their ale went round."

Its gardens extended to the river, where sea trout were to be caught in great numbers on

[1] The surname of Edward Bompasse has received from his descendants varied spellings, such as Bumpas, Bumpus, Bump. In a deed of 1793 "Jeremiah Bump," for £300, conveys his old farm and house in Wareham to his "son Jeremiah Bumpus Jr."

spring mornings. Sloops and scows were moored a little way down the tide, and families that sailed to meeting from the bay shores grounded their boats near by. From its windows could be seen the town stocks, in which drunkards who had left their money in the bar-room were seated until they became sober, jeered at meanwhile by the village boys. The stock-irons also held fast at times those unfortunate offenders who had not money to pay the fines imposed upon them by His Majesty's justice of the peace.

One November day in 1763 this dignitary dismounted in front of the inn and entered the bar-room. He laid aside his beaver hat and red camlet cloak trimmed with fox skins, and seated himself by the great fireplace to chat with his brother the landlord; when there entered a sailor from a sloop just arrived from Nantucket, who, after drinking a grog, became boisterous and finally profane. Whereupon the scene was changed. The bar-room was transformed into a court-room, and this audacious offender of the King's peace was tried, condemned, and punished according to colony law. The sentence which placed him in the stocks was this: —

"At a cort held before John Fearing Esquire one of his majesties Justices of the peace at the House of Benjamin Fearing In Wareham on the 11 of November 1763 Jonathan Wing marriner being Convicted for prefainly Swaring in the Preasence and hearing of said Justice Two prefain Oaths It is considered by said Justice that the said Jonathan pay a fine of Five Shillings for the first of said Oaths and one Shilling For the other to his majesty For the use of the Poor of Wareham or In Default thereof that the said Jonathan being a common sailor shall be sett in the Stocks an Hour and halfe."

In sight from the new meeting-house stood the whipping-post, at which convicted thieves were flogged by a constable, and tramps, or persons who by the law of England were accounted vagabonds, were "whipt with rodds so as it exceed not fifteen stripes."

IX.

A SUNDAY MORNING IN 1771.

LET us turn away from the whipping-post and enter into the new meeting-house on a Sunday morning of June in the year 1771.

Along the highways, the green lanes and field paths, and from the boat landings, come the worshipers in family groups, followed by their dogs. Some are on foot, some are on horseback, the wife riding on a pillion behind her husband, their youngest child on the saddle in front of him; all are of one blood and of one faith. Young men are carrying their best homespun coats on their arms, and young women are carrying their best shoes in their hands, intending to put them on before they enter the meeting-house. His Majesty's justice of the peace comes in a dusty shay, drawn by a stiff-limbed mare that refuses to quicken her gait not-

withstanding her master's repeated objurgations, accompanied by a jerk of the reins, to "Git along, yer old dumb toad!" The people exchange greetings with each other as they arrive at the doors, and when the Squire alights they salute him respectfully, for no man except the minister is considered to be his peer.

We enter by the great door, whose face is covered with all kinds of announcements to the public. Opposite to us as we enter stands the pulpit, lofty and formidable in appearance. There is a large window behind it, a dome-shaped sounding-board above it, and a steep staircase leading up to its entrance. When the minister has ascended the stairs and shut the pulpit door behind him he is entirely lost to sight. At the foot of the pulpit and facing the congregation are the seats of the deacons. Before them stands the communion table, which is not served on sacrament days with unfermented wine, as we know from an order of the church at Milton in May, 1734, "that the Deacons be desired to provide good Canary wine for the Communion Table."

Next to the pulpit is the pew of the minister's wife. Out of it a narrow door opens

into a closet under the pulpit, in which the town's broom, the demijohn of Canary wine, and the pewter baptizing-basin and communion flagons and cups are kept.[1] From this pew a line of square pews runs along the walls of the house, around to the other side of the pulpit. They are of clearest oak, whose beauty is not covered by paints. They were made with the best skill of the village carpenters. They are topped by balustrades, and are so high that when the congregation is seated a few heads only appear in sight above them. Seats are hung by hinges on three sides of each pew, and are lifted when the worshipers stand up for long prayers,

[1] "July 1750. Then Esq^r Fearing delivered me eight pound (Old tenor) & desired me with it to procure a Flaggon which he intended to give to this church as a gift, & have the two first letters of his name set thereon, and if the money was not enough he would make it up to me when I had procured it."

"May 6. 1752. Our sister Mary King wife to Ichabod King of Rochester presented this church with a Bason for baptism with the two first letters of her name thereon: The church voted their thanks to her therefor. And it was the same time proposed & voted that I should have the old Bason allowing therefor what the two Deacons should Judge it to be worth." — *Rev^d Rowland Thacher*, in the *Wareham Church Records.*

permitting them to lean against the partitions, where they get some assistance in standing. The pews are the upper seats of the synagogue. The lower seats are two ranges of benches in the centre of the house, fronting the pulpit and separated by the great alley. In the fore-seats of these ranges, elderly people and those who are hard of hearing are seated; the hind-seats are occupied by younger persons. Of the same rank are certain seats in the galleries, reached by stairs in the corners of the house.

Mr. Rowland Thacher is the minister. He came fresh from Harvard College to this secluded town more than thirty years ago; and here he has stayed, occupied in preaching, farming, marrying, burying, and representing all the scholastic learning of the community. It is said that he is not "as young as he used to be"; but he is still able to sympathize in the fortunes and misfortunes of his flock. He has been poorly paid for his labors; his small salary has always been small and always in arrears, and even now the town is owing to him that of last year. Nevertheless, with a cheerful countenance he appears at the parapet of the pulpit, and

stretching out his hands as signal for the congregation to stand up, he begins the services with a prayer thirty minutes long.

When it is ended the seats in the pews are let fall, making a noise like an irregular discharge of muskets; there is a shuffling of feet on the sanded floor, an uneasy settling of the congregation in the seats, and at last everybody is still. During the stillness Mr. Thacher appears again and announces a psalm to be sung. There are not many psalm books in the house, there is no choir and but little knowledge of music. But there is Deacon William Blackmer, of Blackmer's Pond, who has a strong voice, and for that reason has been appointed to read and tune the psalms in meeting. He stands on the pulpit stairs with a pine pitch-pipe in hand. He blows the key-note, recites two lines of the psalm, adjusts his voice, which is somewhat raspy by reason of too many shoutings to his oxen yesterday, and then he starts away. The congregation joins in an arduous pursuit. It lags behind, its tones are dreadfully discordant. Some dogs sitting in the alleys utter cries of distress, and Mr. Thacher's collie, lying at the pulpit door, howls patheti-

cally at the music. But Deacon Blackmer, as in duty bound, keeps on his winding way, by turns reciting and starting, until all the psalm is worked off; and the congregation then relapses into quiet.

From this condition it is summoned by a signal to stand up while Mr. Thacher becomes "more large in prayer." This prayer is an important part of the service. It has a systematic beginning, middle, and end. It takes alternately the form of a petition and a narration, and includes within its sweep Noah, Abraham, the ancient Hebrews, the sick and the afflicted of the parish, and His Majesty King George the Third. When its long-drawn end is reached there is another slamming of seats and another shuffling of feet on the sanded floor.

In the hush that follows, Thomas Samson, son of Ichabod, doorkeeper, floor-sweeper, grave-digger, is seen going up the pulpit stairs. His earlier duty was beating the town drum to announce meeting-time. Now and then he has swept the meeting-house floor and has sifted fresh sand upon it. He also has provided cold water for the ferocious custom of baptizing babies in the meeting-

house on the first Sunday after their birth, however inclement the weather or perilous the journey thither; a cruel custom as we now estimate the value of infant life. John Cotton, minister at Hampton, wrote in his diary: "Being Ld's day my wife was delivered of a Son who was baptised by myself on ye Sabbath following viz Dec 28. 1701 & was called Simon."

Now, the principal business of Thomas Samson is with the tall, brass-bound hour-glass standing on the pulpit's edge. He turns it in view of the preacher, who is to preach an hour, or as long as the sands are running. It is not the tender mercy and love, but the inflexible justice and anger, of the Supreme Being that the preacher sets before the congregation. He declares that "the saints in heaven will rejoice in seeing the justice of God glorified in the sufferings of the damned." The doctrine is cut into many divisions, in which the objections of skeptics are stated and successfully controverted. Then comes the application, followed by reproof and exhortation adapted to the supposed needs of all hearers. Perhaps it will be necessary to turn the hour-glass for another run before every

hearer can get the teaching fitted to his condition.

The dreadful doctrine of the sermon and the loud voice of the preacher are a contrast to the cheerful and peaceful surroundings of the house, whose doors and windows are open, admitting freely the summer air and the beneficent sunshine. The rustling of leaves on neighboring oaks, the songs of birds, the stamping of horses hitched to the trees, the drowsy hum of insects, are interludes to the long argument. Now a great bumble-bee sails into the house as if it were a traveler turned aside to inquire about the noise in the pulpit. Every eye turns to this new-comer as to one that brings relief. It circles around the preacher's head, it buzzes against the pulpit window, skims back and forth over the congregation, and encourages the restless boys and girls to believe that it is about to alight on the bald head of Barnabas Bates, the warden.

In spite of the energetic tones of the preacher a drowsiness comes over some of the farmers, who try to resist it by standing up, or by taking off their heavy homespun coats, or by going out to quiet their horses. A

babe lying on its mother's lap as she sits in the doorway of the porch utters a cry, and suddenly every head turns towards the babe. But the preacher continues to unfold his gloomy theme, unmindful of the weariness apparent in the congregation. He began at "firstly," he has now passed "twelfthly," and he begs his hearers to follow him "once more" as he opens another gradient.

When at last "finally" is ended, with "aymen!" — there is a noisy rush of boys to the doors, by which they escape into the open air, unless constables have been placed there to keep, as the Salem records have it, "ye doores fast and suffer none to goe out before ye whole exercise bee ended."

X.

THE TOWN'S MINISTER.

ALTHOUGH Rowland Thacher was the first minister of the town, he was not the first minister of the people who formed it. The Agawame planters, in their lay-out of lands in 1701, appropriated two lots for tillage and one lot of meadow, "two and for the yuse of the ministre," as their records say, and this was before they had a minister or knew where to get one. In 1712 they voted "that Mr. Rouland Cotton should have Improvement of ye meadow for seaven years next ensewing." He was the minister of Sandwich town, ten miles to the eastward; and this grant indicates that he rode over to the plantation at certain times to preach, perhaps under the forest trees, while he continued to live in Sandwich and be its minister. He was paid for this itinerant service by the mowing and pasturage of the ministry meadow. In those days there

appears to have been a relation between ministers and horses which made it necessary that measures for the maintenance of each should be taken simultaneously. Mr. Cotton had not only the Agawame meadow for the support of his horse, but he also had the privilege of pasturing that omnivorous animal in the Sandwich burying-ground, provided he fenced it around. This privilege is not to be considered as an indication of poverty, for a burying-ground was, in colonial times, a favorite browsing ground of the minister's horse. But it was sometimes necessary for a town to request its minister "not to have more horses there than shall be really necessary;" as a Plymouth town meeting requested the Rev. Chandler Robbins, in 1789, when he was pasturing several horses on Burial Hill, much to the damage of the grave-stones.

Mr. Cotton had another privilege as the Sandwich town minister. The town had voted to him a portion of "all such drift whales as shall during the time of his ministry come ashore." Samuel Maverick, in "A Briefe Description of New England," written about 1660, speaks of "a good Towne called Sand-

wich, a Towne which affords some yeares a quantity of Whalebone made of Whales which drive up dead in that Bay." And the Plymouth Court had, in 1662, announced that it "would bee very comendable and beneficiall to the townes where God's Providence shall cast any whales if they should agree to sett appart some pte of every such fish or oyle for the Incurragement of an able Godly minnester amongst them." Thus Sandwich was "a good Towne," and with its whales it encouraged Mr. Cotton in the work of the ministry, while he encouraged the Agawame planters.

After these planters had organized their town under the corporate name of Wareham, a name taken — no one knows why — from the ancient town in Dorset, on the English Channel, their first duty was to provide themselves with an "able, learned, orthodox minister of good conversation to dispense the Word of God unto them," according to the province laws. They immediately accepted Rowland Thacher as a man answering to this requirement, and agreed to maintain him by a settlement of three hundred pounds, and an annual salary of one hundred and

twenty pounds old tenor. These sums, although of large denomination, were of small value in coined money. The new minister, whose grandfather, Antony Thacher, came to Boston from Salisbury, England, in 1635, was thirty years old, and married to Abigail Crocker. The town which called him was composed of frugal husbandmen, who made their small gains by small savings. They therefore wished an inexpensive ordination, and instructed their master of ceremonies, one Edward Bump, to provide "not according to the custom of Taverns Selling of Victuals but as shall be Judged Reasonable by the People." And so the minister was ordained in a reasonable way December 26, 1739. The next day he organized a church of forty-four members. It was the frame upon which the town was built; every inhabitant being included within the fold of the parish.

After a time the town became neglectful of its duty to its minister, and as often as it was assembled to consider the constantly recurring problem, "How much money the town is for raising for defraying the necessary charges arising within the same," the question of the amount of salary to be paid

to Parson Thacher caused disagreeable discussions. In this respect Wareham did not stand alone. A similar feeling in regard to the support of ministers prevailed in other towns. In an address to the legislature of 1747, Governor Shirley said: "I have heard so much of the Difficultys which many of the Ministers of the Gospel are brought under thro the great Depreciation of the Bills of Credit in which their Salarys are paid and the little care taken by their People to make them proper allowances for it, that it seems probable many will soon be necessitated to quit the Ministry." This promised to be the destiny of Parson Thacher. But there was a law which declared that if a town neglected for six months to make suitable provision for its minister, the Court of Quarter Sessions shall order a competent allowance for him out of the estate and ability of the people. The town, being reminded of this, was warned to assemble, in May, 1748, "to Cum" — as the town clerk of the period recorded it — "to Sum a Greement with Mr. Thacher that may Be to his Satisfaction as to ye Support that he ought to have from the town that thear may Be return maid to ye General

Cort." In consequence of this warning, a committee was chosen to treat with him "consearning his Salery to know how much money would content him;" and the record says that "he came in town-meeting and thear said he Declined saying anything in that affare," — a decision which showed the honorable character of the man. The result was that three hundred pounds were voted to him as a salary for that year. This was paper money, and the value of the sum was about seventy-five Spanish milled dollars. In 1750 he was given to improve the ministry lands in Agawame, where Mr. Cotton had pastured his horse thirty-eight years before, and he was authorized to bring a suit to dispossess the occupant of them, who was Esquire Israel Fearing, His Majesty's justice of the peace, and consequently the greatest man in town. This disagreeable task he probably did not undertake, as it was evidently an attempt of the town to employ him to pull its chestnuts out of the fire. His salary was soon after made £53 6s. 8d., which, by the new law, was equivalent to one hundred and seventy-eight Spanish milled dollars; and he was told that he might have the town's

money lying in the treasury of Middleborough "for his own use if any be there." Probably there was not a penny there.

Parson Thacher had occasion to discipline some members of the church who refused to make, in public, a penitent confession of their errors, according to a custom derived from Old England.[1] Those who were absent from the communion table on sacrament day were summoned to account for their absence. Perhaps the absentee pleaded that he could not commune with a neighbor who had cheated him in trading, or had spoken bad words of him, or whom he had seen overcome with strong drink. Both persons were summoned before the church, their statements were heard, and the erring one was advised to offer "christian satisfaction" by a public confession of penitence. A refusal to do this caused the member to be "suspended."

A troublesome case of discipline was that of Abigail Muxom, who in 1750 became the subject of a town scandal which was probably relished by the gossips as thoroughly as

[1] "By coaches to church four miles off, where a pretty good sermon and a declaration of penitence of a man that had undergone the church's censure for his wicked life." *Pepys's Diary*, June 16th, 1665.

similar scandals are relished now. Three years later the church took notice of it on the complaint of four members, the gist of which was that "this our sister has been guilty of immodest conduct." It met to consider the evidences on which the complaint rested. These were three old and unsworn statements, running as follows:—

"Elisha Benson Saith That he was at Edmund Muxoms house some time since & saw sd Muxoms wife very familiar with Joseph Benson by talking of balderdash stuff & kissing & hugging one another in the absence of her husband. At another time I saw them coming out of the house together & discovered none but they two. Middleborough, Octr. 1750."

"Caleb Cushman & his wife do Testify & say That we some time since have seen Joseph Benson & Abigail Muxom at our house & their behaviour was uncommon for married people; she fawning about him & sometimes in his lap or upon his knee & he haleing of her, running his face up to hers, & as we suppose kissing of her or aiming to do so & talking & joacking like young people. — Plymton, Octr. 1750."

"Jedidah Swift wife to Eben^{r} Swift Junr Saith that she was at the house of Edmund Muxom

four times the summer past & his wife Abigail Muxom did several times call her child to her & ask the child who its father was, & the child would answer Doctor Jo's at which she would laugh & make sport of. — Wareham, Decem^r. 3. 1750."

The records, written by Parson Thacher, state that the complaint and "the above evidences were read to the church in the presence of this our sister. She denyed the two first evidences as having no truth in them, but the last she owned to be true." She was then, by a vote, "suspended from the communion table till she give a christian satisfaction;" and soon the matter was forgotten.

In 1753, while perplexed about his salary, his wife died. In the same year also died the eldest son of Esquire Israel Fearing, leaving a pretty and pious young widow. Naturally the thoughts of Parson Thacher turned to her, and occasionally he might be seen riding his mare to Agawame to visit her. It was a lonesome ride, across the Woonkinco River by a causeway over the dam, then eastward two miles on a sandy road winding through silent pine woods in which sheep were pastured and foxes were hunted, until

it reached Deacon Swift's inn, where the farmers were accustomed to barter mutton and hay for rum by the gallon. The inn stood on a picturesque site near the bank of the Agawame River; near it were a lumber mill and a merchant's store, making a fussy little centre of trade. But the parson does not pull up there. He rides a half mile further, and reaches "the neighborhood," nigh the burying-acre, where the Squire's dwelling-house stood, and stands to this day. He was not a stranger there. The Squire's account-book mentions him as a buyer of "cheas, malases, hay, hunny, an ox waying 427 pounds, laths, mutten." But his errand now is for nothing of that sort. He wants the pretty widow for a wife. He is many years her senior, yet, being the town minister and a graduate of Harvard College, he is the man whom any woman might be glad to wed. His suit was short and successful, and in the eleventh month from the day he became a widower he married Hannah Fearing.[1]

[1] The will of Israel Fearing, Esquire, 1754, contained the following bequest: "I give and allow to my daughter in law Hannah Fearing during her widowhood, the following privilege namely, the use of the Westerly lower

The large and increasing family of the devoted parson needed for their maintenance all that he could earn; but whatever was the amount of salary voted by the town, it was always far in arrears. This condition of things continuing year after year made it necessary for the town to do something. In September, 1771, it appointed "Dea William Blackmer mr Barnabas Bates and Esqr Fearing and Ensign John Gibbs agents to treat with Mr Thacher about his Sallery to know what he is willing to tack for ye Insuing year." But this game had been played too often

room in the dwelling house I have given to my son Benjamin with the westerly garret, one third of the cellar, one third of the Leanter at the West end with liberty to bake and wash in said Leanter. Also pasturage for two cows yearly in the season of pasturing to go with sd Benj's cows with privilege of using one third of the little barn on said farm. Also liberty to improve a small field about half an acre on the South side of the road near said house now fenced in. Also liberty of cutting ten cords of wood yearly off of the lot I bought of Ebenezer Perry. Also one half of the fruit yearly which shall grow in the orchard by said Dwelling House. Also pasturage and hay for ten sheep yearly on the farm I have given to her son Israel only in the Spring, Fall and Winter. Also fodder or salt hay to winter two cows yearly off of the place I have given her son Israel." All these privileges she gave up to marry the town minister.

during the thirty years preceding, and Parson Thacher would not treat with them. Therefore in October the selectmen issued a warrant for a town meeting. The warrant recited in detail the several questions to be voted upon, as follows : —

"to Raise money to Pay ye Rev mr Thachers Sallery for ye Present year

"and Likewise to agree with mr thacher as he Is Not Satisfied with ye Poorness of his former Payment what sum or sums he Shall Have for ye Futer yearly and at what time in ye year it shall be paid him

"and Likewise weather sd town will voate to Give him any Interest for that Parte that be Neglected to be Paid in at such Set times or ye whole upon Neglect of Payment at sd time

"and Likewise wheather sd town will allow any Interest for what is behind for Last years Sallery by reason of it not being Paid in seasionably."

It does not appear that these Likewises were ever answered.

His promised salary never promptly paid, he tilled the soil for a living as well as the souls of the parish, and found his only recreation in walks about the sandy Zion. For

such an humble laborer there were no luxuries, and no vacations except to exchange for a Sunday with the minister of a neighboring town. So Parson Thacher lived in his parish, and died there in the winter of 1775. During his fatal illness the town meeting discussed his poor financial condition, and voted not to allow him anything "for the year past more than his stated salery." But he was soon to be free from the tyranny of town meetings. Twelve days after this vote he entered into his rest, leaving a "good savor of godlyness behind him." Seven months after he was dead the town chose a committee to settle with his eldest son "relative to his Hon'd Father's Sallery the last year which was behind." Whether the son ever received the arrears of money due to his honored father, no one now knoweth.

Wareham must have a minister even if it will not pay his salary promptly; and no one having offered himself as a successor of Mr. Thacher, a town meeting held on the 3d of April, 1775, chose "Lieut. John Gibbs to Provide a minister for the towne & a Place for him to bord at." Those were rebellious times

in the province ; and John Gibbs was a commissioned officer in the county militia, which responded to the Lexington alarm three weeks after he had been chosen to supply the pulpit. He therefore had no time to attend to ministry matters, and went off with his company to join the provincial army near Boston, leaving the pulpit without a minister.

During the ensuing summer a young man named Josiah Cotton was found at Plymouth waiting a call to preach. Immediately the town was assembled to consider the matter, and a committee was appointed "to wait on the Rev. Mr. Cotton to see on what Terms he will Preach and on what Terms he would settle." This having been done, the formalities customary in those times between the town and the church were attended to. The town nominated Mr. Cotton, or, as the phrase of the time was, "improved him as a candidate for the Resettlement of the Gospel Ministry." The church then voted that "it is its Mind and earnest Desire" to take him as its pastor, and the town voted "to concur and Join with ye Church in a call to settle Mr. Cotton."

His annual salary was to be £65 13s. 4d.,

equivalent to two hundred and nineteen Spanish milled dollars, and he was to have a settlement of £160, to be paid in three years. There was no parsonage in the parish, and the new minister was disinclined to "board round," as did the schoolmaster and the shoemaker while practicing their professions. He wrote a letter, in which he said, if the town would furnish him with a parsonage, he would, "on account of the difficulty of the times, relinquish the sum of six pounds thirteen shillings and four pence for the year to come, and after that time if the day should still continue distressing by a stoppage of trade, make a proportionable relinquishment if consistent with necessary support." He foresaw that a war with Great Britain, which the politicians of the seditious town of Boston were then trying to inflame, would impoverish his parish, and bring distress upon the province. The town did not stop to think of these things, nor did it provide a parsonage, but immediately made plans for the ordination.

As ministers were settled for life, an ordination, on account of its rare occurrence, attracted all the inhabitants of the town and

many from neighboring towns to see the procession of the ordaining council escorted by drums and fifes, and to enjoy the services at the meeting-house and the free lunch at the tavern. It was arranged to accompany the ordination of the new minister with joyous festivities of eating and drinking. The job was farmed out to the lowest bidder, who happened to be the eldest son of the previous minister, and who did not get his pay for it until the next spring, when ten pounds and two shillings were voted "to Rowland Thacher for making Entertanement for the ordernation." His instructions were to make entertainment "for the Counsell, Ministers & Schollars for the Sum of Two Shillings & Eight Pence for Each Man & Horse." In addition to this there was a feast of a more private character arranged by the selectmen, who commissioned Samuel Savery and Ebenezer Briggs "to Provide an Entertainment for Some Particular Gentlemen & Mr. Cotton's friends, and to nominate and Invite such persons as they shall think Proper." Doubtless there was great hilarity at this municipal junket. It may be presumed that striped bass and scup, mutton, venison, and

corn puddings, wild ducks, oysters, crabs, and clams, adorned the board. Shell-fish were plenty along-shore then, as they are now, and perhaps it was in anticipation of this high time that in the spring of this year the town had ordered "that there shall be no shell-fish nor shells carried out of the town." The courses were probably served with Canary wine and Barbados rum, and with these the selectmen and their "Particular Gentlemen" drank Parson Cotton's health and wished him a successful ministry.

Notwithstanding these good wishes, his career in Wareham was short. The distressing days to which he had referred in his letter became more and more distressing. The rebellion against the King, and the ensuing war, had made the farmers poor, silver coins had disappeared from circulation, and the value of the new paper money was reduced to such a low degree that the minister's salary became a mere pittance, utterly inadequate for his support. Mr. Cotton was obliged to ask again and again for more compensation. Six hundred pounds were voted to him. This not being sufficient for his support, and the people being unable or unwilling

to afford him further relief, he was dismissed by a vote of town meeting in March, 1779. He packed his sermons in his saddlebags, mounted his horse, and returned to Plymouth, where he abandoned the ministry, which could not give him a maintenance, became clerk of the courts, and a much respected citizen of that town.

After he rode away there was an interval of nearly four years before another town minister was secured, during which time the deacons or selectmen were riding hither and thither after a candidate. This riding is noted in a record of the town clerk of 1782, in which the union of diverse subjects in one vote is characteristic of the methods of doing public business at that time: — "Voted to Jeremiah Bump for rideing after a Candidate to Preach, £1 4s. 0d. — to Prince Burgess for a Shirt for wd Lovell & keeping mr Parmalys horse £0 18s. 0d."

In 1782 Noble Everitt, a graduate of Yale College, was called to be the town minister. He showed much shrewdness by not accepting the call until by a negotiation with the town he had obtained satisfactory terms of compensation. It was agreed to give him

land, and to build upon it a two-story dwelling-house for him "in a decent and handsome manner with a convenient cellar under the same," to be finished in November, 1783; to give him a salary of "£56 silver money," free use of the ministry lands and meadows, and "wood for the maintenance of his fires." The town went to work in earnest to carry out this undertaking. The selectmen issued a warrant directing the collector to levy and collect of each person on a list prepared for the purpose his or her proportion, as set down, of "the sum of three hundred and forty-three pounds, five shillings, three pence, two farthings, for defraying the necessary expenses for building the Rev. Mr. Noble Everitt's house and other ministeral charges." The collector was directed to seize the goods and chattels of those refusing to pay the assessment, to keep the same four days, and then if payment was not made, to sell them "at an Outcry for payment of said money." Those who had no goods or chattels and refused to pay, he was directed to arrest and commit "unto the common Goal of the county, there to remain until he or they pay and satisfy the several sums whereat they are

respectively assessed." The list of assessed persons probably contains the name of every head of a family dwelling in the town, and of every widow having an estate. It was a severe treatment to which they were subjected for the public good; but the house was built, and it is still standing on the old road which went from the meeting-house to the settlement on Cromeset Neck.

The first action of Parson Everitt was to propose a season of fasting and self-examination. The members of the church, declaring themselves to be "sensible of our coldness and lukewarmness in religion," voted to renew "our covenant with God and with one another," and they appointed a committee "to converse with brethren and sisters who are or may be guilty of public offence according to the rule given Mat. 18." These cleansing explorers brought to light an old scandal which had been forgotten. Thirty years had elapsed since Abigail Muxom was disciplined. Now an old woman, she was again called up to listen to the reading of the complaint recorded against her in 1753, the evidences written in 1750, and to the statements of new witnesses as to her conduct "upwards of twenty years ago:" —

"John Benson of Middleborough testifieth that upwards of 20 years ago he was at the house of Edmund Muxom the husband of said Abigail, sometime in the afternoon before sunset, he saw said Abigail on bed with Joseph Benson, in the easterly part of the house. He also saith that at another time he was at work near Edmund Muxom's house and heard him repeatedly bid his son Lem. go and fetch the horse and on refusal corrected him. Abigail came to the door and said — What do you whip that child for? it is none of yours, upon which John Benson said I always thought so, at which she went into the house and said no more. April 11th, 1783."

"Hannah Besse testifieth that sometime about 20 years ago or upward she went to Edmund Muxom's house late in the evening and there saw Abigail his wife on bed by the fire with Joseph Benson. April 11th, 1783."

The accused woman, having listened to these statements, positively declared, in presence of the assembled church, that "the evidences of John Benson and Harriet Besse are false." There was no friend or attorney to represent her before this self-righteous tribunal; and, without cross-examining the unsworn witnesses, the church voted

(men only were allowed to vote) that she "is guilty of the charge." Then there was a pause in the proceedings, and the people went home as if to think over the matter. After some weeks had elapsed, she was again summoned before the church, and was "admonished by the pastor" of the perilous position in which she stood. Some of the sinful brethren who had voted her to be guilty, "labored" with her; and sympathizing women conversed with her. But she refused to confess that she was guilty of the alleged sin, and resolutely maintained that the witnesses were liars.

From the neighboring towns six ministers were then summoned to the inquest. They came and made a holiday; the six ministers on horseback, and the village idlers, to whom the spicy story was familiar, crowding around them and believing that justice must reign though the heavens fell.

Again there was a meeting of the church; Abigail Muxom stood in the sovereign presence of the six ministers, while the floor and galleries of the meeting-house were crowded by curious spectators attracted by what was to them "the greatest show on earth." The

evidences were read aloud from the records : the accused woman again denied their truth ; the six ministers were requested "to give their opinion what particular immodest conduct our sister is guilty of, and how this church ought to proceed with her." They, "having conversed with the Brethren of the church and heard what said Abigail had to say in her own defence," consulted together, and declared that her "immodest conduct in former years with one Doct. Joseph Benson was forbidden by the 7th commandment," and that it was her duty "to make a penitent and public confession of her sin ;" and "if she refuse or neglect to do it," the church "to proceed after other suitable forbearance to excommunication." The church then "Voted that Abigail Muxom is guilty of immodest conduct according to the opinion of the Rev^{d} Pastors," and it appointed three stern-visaged men to converse with her in the hope of obtaining a confession of the alleged sin. Their mission, as they reported, "appeared to have no good effect." Then, after another delay indicating a reluctance to pass such a terrible judgment upon "this unhappy sister," the church came together

and the men "Voted that Abigail Muxom be rejected and excommunicated from the communion of this church, as being visibly a hardened and impenitent sinner out of the visible Kingdom of Christ, one who ought to be viewed and treated by all good people as a heathen and a publican in imminent danger of eternal perdition. Praying that this separation of hers from christian fellowship may not be eternal, but a means of her true and unfeigned repentance that her soul may be saved in the day of the Lord."

Four years later Parson Everitt was prostrated by an illness which continued month after month, and caused the church to be perplexed respecting its duty "on account of their pastor being unable to preach by reason of bodily indisposition." Advice was sought from the town meeting; and after a lapse of ten months the six neighboring ecclesiastics were consulted on the question whether the church "ought to wait any longer for his recovery or proceed to a separation." It looked as if Abigail Muxom was about to be avenged, when Parson Everett suddenly recovered his health and returned to the pulpit which he had narrowly escaped losing.

He appears to have been a thrifty man. In addition to his labors as a preacher, in which he gained a good repute, he was a successful farmer; and it is noted in the town records that he built a rail fence around the ministry fresh meadow with two hundred cedar rails, which the town had bought for that purpose from the "loest bider." He also received from the town eighteen shillings a year, or three dollars, for sweeping the meeting-house and taking care of it. This was an office of honor as well as of profit, and it was afterwards held by Andrew Mackie, the town physician. The parson increased the interesting variety of his occupations by leasing a fulling mill on the Woonkinco dam in sight of the meeting-house. Here on Sunday he preached to his people, and there on Monday he cleansed their homespun cloths, even unto the year of his death, which was the year 1819, when colonial times had begun to pass away.

XI.

THE TOWN'S SCHOOLMASTER.

IN February, 1741, the farmers of Wareham came together and voted "to have a School Master this year." Having done this they rested. A month later a warrant was posted on the meeting-house door summoning a meeting "To know the Towns Mind, whether they are for having a School Master or Mistress." They came together again and voted "to have a School Mistress for six months and Jedediah Wing to be the man to provide her in each half of the town." And then they rested again.

It is doubtful if Jedediah Wing did as he was directed to do, for no mention of the engagement of a schoolmistress is to be found in the town records. But Israel Fearing's account-book reveals the fact that there was at this time a teacher who went from house

to house to fit children with knowledge, as the shoemaker went in a like circuit to fit them with shoes ; and it is probable that the fittings of the latter were fully as good as those of the former. This is what the account-book says : —

"April y^e^ 27 day 1741 Mr doty came to keep Scool at my hous

"June ye 8 day in 1741 Mr doty came to boord at my hous and keep Scool thare to ye 22 day of July

"Jenauary y^e^ 14 day 1742 biniamin tupper came to my hous to ceep Scool"

In May, 1743, a warrant for a town meeting was issued, stating a desire "to know the Towns Mind whether they are for having the School Settled and also how often they are for having it moved and how they are for haveing Him Dieted." These questions were disposed of by an agreement to keep a school four months in each of three sections of the town ; and as to the schoolmaster's board, it should be rated at eight shillings a week, old tenor, which at that time may have been equal to nearly forty cents in honest silver money.

The treasurer's book shows that a school was kept in 1743, although this fact would not be established by the action of the town meeting. In the opinion of the rural population of New England, schools were an unnecessary expense. Oftentimes the formalities of town meetings, by which it was ordered "to set up a school this year," had no other intent than to show an outward compliance with the unpopular school laws of the province. Whenever the people could contrive a way by which the expenses of a school could be saved, there would be no school during that year. And when, on account of this neglect to observe the school laws, the town was presented by the grand jury of the county, it was customary to depute the most influential townsman to go and answer the presentment by such excuses as could be made.

In February, 1744, the usual routine was repeated. The farmers were summoned "to know what the Towns Mind is for doing about a School for the insuing year." The school of the previous year having cost fifty-five pounds, old tenor, which may have been equivalent to fifty-five Spanish dollars, and it

being necessary to raise this sum by a general tax, the Town's Mind was for doing nothing; and not until the following July did it consent to have a school opened. Then Eleazar King was chosen schoolmaster. He gave satisfaction to his patrons until the day when the town clerk stood up in the meeting-house and screamed out Eleazar's intention to marry Lydia Bump, who was already married to a wandering husband. This intention being declared by the church to be an offense to the good and wholesome laws of the province, he was compelled to quit the school, while Lydia was disciplined, and the town cast about for another schoolmaster.[1]

John Bishup, the town clerk, wrote in the

[1] "At a church meeting July 1. 1747. voted that our sister Lydia Bump be put by from special ordinances till she gave christian satisfaction for the following offence. viz. In that she has for some time kept company with & now is published to Eleazar King in order for marriage: altho her husband has not been absent but about one year & half, & in which time he has often been seen & heard of by us & that too within a year past, which procedure we look upon as contrary to the good & wholesome laws of this province in that case provided. Also voted yt sd E. King be denied communion with us & ye church in Plymton to whom he belongs be acquainted with it." — *Wareham Church Records.*

records of 1748, as follows: "Decon Elles says he had discerst mr William Rayment to know whether he would Sarve the town as a Scoolmaster and he Inclined to Sarve the town if the town will allow him Eightey Pounds a year old teener and ye modarater Put It to vote whether ye town would Imploy ye sd Raymond In the affare In Keeping Scool at the aforesd tearms and the vote Past In ye Negative"

On this rejection of the deacon's candidate, Samuel Savery was chosen "to Bee the man to Git a Sutable man," and to report "what tarmes such a man would sarve the town for." In January, 1749, he reported that William Rayment had reduced his price, and could be had "to keep scool half a yeare for thirty nine pounds old teener." The moderator, so says the record, "Put to vote whether the Town would have sd Rayment to keep scool on ye tarmes offerd or not and the Vote Past in the Negative."

In the mean time the intention of marriage between Lydia Bump and Eleazar King was atoned in a public and penitent confession by the woman of her error. This brought Eleazar into favor, and he was chosen again to

keep the town's school. One of the schoolmasters in subsequent years and previous to the Revolution was Andrew Mackie, the town physician, who, having studied physic with his father at Southampton, Long Island, left his home a young man in search of fortune. Arriving at Wareham, dressed in a red coat and small-clothes of good quality, he took lodgings at the inn, where he attracted the notice of Charity Fearing, the innkeeper's daughter, who fell in love with him on sight and eventually married him. Here, beginning his career by teaching the town school, and by riding long distances over bad roads to practice physic upon the farmers as opportunity offered, he found the fortune of which he was in search. There is a writing in the town treasurer's book running as follows: "July ye 26: 1766 Paid John Fearing Esqre for Bowrding Docter Maci when he keept scool 17s. 4d."

The frugal mind of the colonial farmer reckoned the schoolmaster as a day-laborer, and the desire was to hire him at as low a price, and to spread his labors over as large a territory, as possible. Each section of the town had his services during two or three

months of the year, when the scholars were taught to read, to write, to cipher, and nothing more. He was paid sometimes in money and sometimes in merchandise, and his diet was "thrown in." There was no standard by which to test his skill as a teacher, but the one generally esteemed the most skillful was he whose price was the lowest; even if he were the chief of blockheads

> "Who tries with ease and unconcern
> To teach what ne'er himself could learn."

His official seat was a great chair, behind a table or desk on which he made a display of birch rods. There he announced his laws, whose penalties were floggings; and there he frowned upon the youngsters whose roguish pranks kept him so actively occupied that the flag bottom of the chair needed frequent repairing. "Paid ten shillings," say the Woburn records of 1747, "for bottoming the Scoole Hous Cheer."

The schoolhouse was usually a small unpainted building standing by the roadside like

> "A ragged beggar sunning."

It contained a large fireplace, for whose fires the children's parents provided wood. Its

square room was furnished with rough benches, made smoother and glossier every year by the friction of the woolen frocks and leathern breeches of restless pupils to whom schooling was a bore.

"Within the master's desk is seen,
Deep scarred by raps official;
The warping floor, the battered seats,
The jack-knife's carved initial;
The charcoal frescos on its wall,
Its door-worn sill betraying
The feet that, creeping slow to school,
Went storming out to playing."

XII.

TOWN LIFE IN THE REVOLUTION.

ON a back leaf of the town-book, between the records of marriage and death, it is written: "At a Request of ye town of Boston the Inhabatance of the Town of Wareham met togather on ye 18 Day of Jan^{r} 1773 To Consider of matters of Grevinces ye Provience was under."

At this meeting three men were selected to lay "ye above said matters of Grevince" before the town, and then an adjournment was voted to the bar-room of Benjamin Fearing's inn, the 8th day of February. Here the same persons met on the appointed day "to Consider," as the quaint narrative states, "of a Letter of Corrispondence from the town of Boston Occasioned by Sundrey Grievences the People of this Provence at Present Labour under Respecting Sundrey acts of the Parliament of Greait Brition

therby Drowing a tribute or tax from the People of this Provience." Resolutions were adopted similar to those adopted in other towns, the substance of which was that the people of Wareham "have been and still are" deprived of their natural rights as citizens of the British empire, and will join other towns in an effort to regain them. The scholarly style of these resolutions, as well as their political statements, show that they were drafted in Boston.

The assembly at the inn was not a regular town meeting; it was not summoned by the selectmen's warrant; it was not held in the meeting-house, the place appointed for all town meetings; and its proceedings were written by Noah Fearing, the town clerk, not in their proper place, but in a part of the book where they would be concealed from general observation.[1]

[1] "Voated to aggorn this meeting from ye meeting house onto an Oack tree out of Doors." — *Wareham Records*, June, 1771. "Voated the town meetings for the Futer be holden in the Porch Chamber of the meeting House and if at any time the Selectmen thinck that their wants more Room for to hold any town meeting then to order the Doors opened that the People Go into the Gallarys if they see cause." — *Wareham Records*, March, 1772.

It appears to have been a caucus of partisans, aided by the town clerk, who sympathized with the spirit of rebellion, as his subsequent conduct showed. It was an illustration of the manner in which the Boston Committee of Correspondence seized upon the authority of a town's name to manufacture a public opinion hostile to Great Britain, wherever such an opinion did not exist.

There is no reason to believe that the farmers of Wareham — loyal, contented, industrious, and living remote from the strife of politics — felt any interest in the plans of the Boston committee, or in its theories of natural rights. Indeed, the theories of this committee were at odds with those of the legislature of the province, which only two years previous, March 27, 1771, had accepted an address from the town of Ashfield declaring that "natural rights are in this province wholly superseded by civil obligations, and in matters of taxation individuals cannot with the least propriety plead them."

As the town had always been contented to be without a representative in the legislature, while paying the province taxes, it had practically assented to the principle of "taxation

without representation," which had become a subject of contention in the refractory town of Boston. In 1773 it was fined by the General Court six pounds "for not sending a Representative." At the same time other towns to the number of thirty were fined for the same default; an indication that a large part of the rural population of the province felt no interest in the political questions agitated at that time.[1] It does not appear

[1] This lack of interest is also shown in the trivial excuses commonly made by towns petitioning the General Court for a remission of fines imposed for not sending a representative. In 1771 the town of Westford prayed for a remission of a fine of eight pounds because it "was at the expence of Building a new meeting house." The excuse of Southboro' was — "greater expence than usual in supporting their Poor in making and repairing Bridges and Roads." The excuse of Sherbourn was — "great expence in rebuilding their meeting house and settling a minister." The excuse of Chelsea was — "the smallness of the said Town and the poverty of its Inhabitants." The excuse of Upton was — "great expence in building a meeting house and a prospect of further expence in purchasing Roads to the said House." The excuse of George Town was — "as the Inhabitants were in very distressing circumstances occasioned by the destruction of their Grass by Worms." The alleged destruction of their liberties by the British Parliament was of less importance than the destruction of grass by worms!

that the town sent any delegate to the important convention called by inhabitants of Boston in 1768, at which ninety-six towns of Massachusetts were said to be represented, to protest against the revenue acts, taxing the colonies, quartering troops upon the people, and other perils threatening, as was supposed, their liberties. The import tax on tea — "That worst of Plagues, the detestable Tea," as the "Sons of Liberty" called it — had been reduced from twelve pence to three pence the pound; and the Wareham farmers had no interest in joining in a revolt against it with the Boston importers and tradesmen, who, as smugglers, had long been defrauding the King's revenue.

There was at this time a good deal of loyalty to the King in the Old Colony. Many families had always kept bright the lion and unicorn in the back of the chimney, and if they avoided discussions with revolutionists they were none the less proud in the fact that they were natural-born and loyal subjects of Old England. In 1773 they caused to be dissolved the celebrated Old Colony Club of Plymouth, an institution established

to keep green the memory of the Pilgrims, rather than allow its name to be used as representing rebellion against the King. It was this condition of public opinion that justified James Warren, the originator of the committee of correspondence, in declaring to Samuel Adams that the Plymouth County towns could not be aroused except by a power that would arouse the dead. Deeds and other private documents written by the colonists of that period, when referring to the royal government, exhibit a veneration for the King which was not to be found in the words of the orators and tavern and wharf idlers who controlled public opinion in Boston. "Join us or die!" was their cry early and late.[1]

[1] "There was at the same time in and about Boston a large mob element professing ardent patriotism, and commonly regarded as auxiliary to the movements which issued in the war of independence. I believe that this element was in every respect as harmful and detrimental as it was unlawful and immoral; that it thinned the ranks of the patriots, disgusted many worthy citizens with the cause which it professed to further, and was of unspeakable benefit to the neighboring provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick in giving them from among the exiles from Massachusetts the best judges, lawyers, clergymen, and men of elegant culture that they have ever had, including not a few graduates of Harvard College." — *Dr. Andrew P. Peabody's address to the Bostonian Society*, April, 1888.

As the farmers of Wareham had frequent intercourse with the neighboring village of Bedford, where the famous tea-ship Dartmouth was owned, they probably knew of her arrival at Boston, and that an excited multitude in the Old South meeting-house had resolved to boycott all teas until the import tax was removed. They knew also that the tea-chests and their contents had been thrown overboard, as if they were, as Samuel Adams classed them, "inveterate enemies" of the country. They also may have heard of the Boston port bill, an act of Parliament to suspend the foreign and coastwise trade of Boston as a punishment for the tea-chest riot; but they made no sign. Gifts of cattle, fish, firewood, pork, clothing, butter, flour, grain, vegetables, and money were sent to Boston from many towns to relieve its distress under the port bill, during the summer of 1774. The records show that nothing was sent from Wareham.

A few months later a lawless event in their neighborhood brought to the notice of the Wareham farmers the disturbed condition of public affairs. A large number of young men met in the adjoining town of Rochester,

September 26, 1774, and organized themselves "to make an excursion into the county of Barnstable," and there by forcible means to prevent the Inferior Court of Common Pleas from holding its regular session. This was one of the oldest courts in the province; its jurymen were selected in town meeting; from its decisions an appeal could be taken to the Superior Court of Judicature in which jurors were drawn by the sheriff. Political agitators declared that the method of drawing jurors by a sheriff, instead of drawing them "out of the box" in town meeting, put in jeopardy the rights of the people.[1] By breaking up the county court it was intended

[1] "May ye 3d 1756 the Town chose Simon Hathaway Petit Jureyman as the Law Directs by Drawing him out the Box to Serve for Trials at the next Inferior Court to be holden att Plymouth." — "July ye 13 day 1756 The Town Drawd Thomas Whitten out of the Box to Serve on ye Petitt Jurey." — *Wareham Records*, 1756.

"About eight o'clock Sunday evening there passed by here about two hundred men . . . they had taken Vinton (the Sheriff) . . . they called upon him to deliver two warrants (for juries). Upon his producing them they made a circle and burnt them. They then called a vote whether they should huzza but it being Sunday evening it passed in the negative." — *Letter of Abigail Adams, Braintree*, 14 September, 1774.

to destroy an avenue through which business could pass to the higher tribunal.

This band of young men, intent on disorder, styled itself "The Body of the People," a title which recalls the three tailors of Tooley Street, who in an address to Parliament styled themselves, "We the People of England." It passed through Wareham, where it was joined by Noah Fearing, John Gibbs, Nathan Briggs, and Salathiel Bumpus, and arrived at Sandwich in the same evening. The next morning it marched to Barnstable, a part on foot, a part on horseback, a drum-corps at its head, and Wareham men or boys riding as guards in its rear. On arriving at Barnstable the band was increased to a large mob, which took possession of the grounds in front of the court-house and sent scouts through the town to ferret out loyal people and compel them to renounce "toryism." The justices, who were dining together, were notified that the "Body of the People" desired them not to open the court and would send them an order to that effect in writing. These worthy men received the order, and soon appeared in the street, wearing their official robes, and led by the high sheriff, on

their way to the court-house to discharge their duties. As the mob did not make way, the chief justice asked for what purpose they were assembled. The leader of the mob, standing on the court-house steps, replied, in the style of a modern politician, "All that is dear to us and the welfare of unborn millions direct us to prevent the court from being opened." To this the chief justice answered, — according to the report written by a Rochester boy named Abraham Holmes, who was one of the mob, — "This is a constitutional court, the jurors have been drawn from the boxes as the law directs, why do you interrupt us?"

The leader then justified himself by the reply: "But from the decisions of this court an appeal lies to a court whose judges hold office during the King's pleasure, over which we have no control!"

The mob prevented the session of the court and compelled the justices to sign certain political obligations in harmony with its own views. It was not dispersed until it had made a general disturbance in the town, had resolved to boycott British goods, and to suppress peddlers who sold Bohea tea.

While such events were transpiring there was nothing written upon the town records indicating any sympathy with the rebellion. Town meetings were held, as usual, and the Town's Mind expressed its will in regard to sheep, foxes, hogs, alewives, highways, the minister, the schoolmaster, the meeting-house, the rates, the paupers, as it had done in preceding years.

Then came the year 1775, and the town records began to speak as follows: —

"At a Town meeting regularly warnd & held in Wareham Ianuary ye 16 1775 made 1^{ly} choice of Capt Noah Fearing moderator. 2^{ly} Voted not to Send A man to the Provincial Congress. 3^{ly} Voted to allow to each minute man 1^{s}. 4^{d}. per Week. 4^{ly} voted not to make any Province and County tax. 5^{ly} Voted to adjourn to February ye 6th Day."

The wages fixed for minute men, the vote about the province tax, the refusal to send a representative to the Provincial Congress, show that rebellion was in the air, but its spirit had not yet seized upon the town. The little that exhibited itself had probably been worked up by the moderator, who was one of the principal men engaged in the Barnstable

riot.[1] The next town meeting was held on the 20th of March; when it was voted "to Purchase six Guns for use of ye Town," and the minute men, having no occupation by which they could earn the one shilling and four pence (22 cents) per week which the

[1] "At an adjourned Town meeting held in Wareham the 6th Day of February 1775

1ly Voted not to allow to the Revd Mr Thacher anything for the year Past more than his Stated Salery

2dly Voted to vendue the Ministree Lands & meadows in the West End of ye Town the Improvement of it for one year & the Profits to go towards Defraying the Revd Mr Thachers Sallery

3dly Voted Deacon Willm Blackmer & Samll Savery & Joshua Briggs Be a Committy to Vendue the same

4ly Voted to Pay the Province tax to Andw Mackie & he to keep it till the town Shall order it otherways

5ly Voted To Dissolve the meeting."

"By Virtue of the annual Warrant Set up by the Select Men The Town met together on Monday the twentieth Day of March 1775 & acted as follows —

1ly made Choice of Capt Noah Fearing moderator

2dly Chose Andrew Mackie Town Clerk

3dly Voted to chuse three Select Men one in each End & one in the Middle part of the Town

4ly Chose Ebenz Briggs Smll Savery Capt Noah Fearing Selectmen & Assesors

5ly Voted to hire constables

6ly Chose Barnabas Bump Jabez Besse Jur Wardions

7ly Capt Fearing Thomas Whitten Joseph Bump 2d Surveyor of highways

town had engaged to pay them — were ordered "to assist in takeing Care of the Alewives." On the 3d of April it was "voted not to allow the minute men Wages any longer."

The news of the battle at Lexington

8ly Ebenz Swift Rowland Thacher fence Viewers

9ly Thomas Norris Prince Burgess Tything men

10ly Saml Savery Surveyor of Lumber Sealor of weights and measures

11ly Joseph Sturdifant Samll Briggs Enos Howard Hog Reaves

12ly Jabez Burgess Sealer of leather

13ly Zepheniah Bump Jonathan Gibbs Deer Men

14ly Deacon Blackmer Thomas Whetten John Fearing Nathan Briggs Barnabas Bate to take Care of the Alewives

15ly Voted for Capt Israel Fearing with his company to assist in takeing Care of the Alewives

16ly Voted that there should be no Shell fish nor shells sold nor carryed out of town.

17ly Chose David Nye Jonathan Gibbs Jesse Swift Saml Swift to Inform relating to the Shell fish

18ly Chose Jeremiah Bump Town treasurer to serve for one Dollar

19ly Voted Sheep to go at large without a Shepherd & Swine yoked & ringed.

20ly Voted to lay out the road by Zepheniah Bump if it could be done without Purchasing any land

21ly Voted to Purchase Six Guns for use of ye Town

lastly Voted to adjourn this annual meeting to the twenty fourth Day of April three o'Clock afternoon"

reached Wareham by a rider from Boston on the 20th of April. When the town met on the 24th, no allusion to the battle was made, and the meeting was adjourned for five months, with as little concern as to the magnitude of current events, as if they involved no issues greater than those which had interested town meetings in previous years. On receipt of the news from Lexington a company of militia started for Boston, and another started for Marshfield, where many

"At Town meeting regularly warnd held on the third Day of April 1775 —

1ly chose Capt Noah Fearing moderator

2dly chose Saml Savery Deacon Blackmer Joshua Gibbs Noah Fearing Barnabas Bates to be a Committee to Vendue the Improvement of the ministree lands & meadows for one year

3dly Voted not to allow the minute men Wages any longer

4ly chose Lieut John Gibbs to Provide a minister for the town & a Place for him to bord at

lastly Voted to adjourn this meeting to the twenty fourth of this Instant at two o'Clock."

"Town Meeting April 24th, 1775. Voted

1ly to Pay the Province tax to Henry Gardner Esqr of Stowe

2dly to adjourn this meeting to 18th September next." — *Wareham Records*, 1775.

loyalists were living under protection of the King's troops. The latter company was commanded by Major Israel Fearing, whose wife, Lucy Bourne, was an ardent loyalist. The tradition is that as he passed out of his door to lead the men who were waiting for him, his wife, desiring to prevent his going, seized fast to the skirts of his military coat. But, like Captain Sir Dilberry Diddle in the song,

> "Said he to his lady, My lady, I'll go;
> My company calls me, you must not say no,"

and he broke away from her, leaving a part of his uniform in her hands.

During the summer of 1775 the town was principally interested in efforts to make a shrewd bargain with Josiah Cotton — "to see," as the records state it, "on what Terms he will Preach and on what Terms he would settle," and in preparing for the festivities which were to celebrate his ordination in the new meeting-house. An indifference to public affairs continued until the Declaration of Independence, when the town was called upon to express its preference for a new form of government; and it declared in favor of that which had been enjoyed under the colonial charter, in these words: —

"At a town meeting regularly warnd & held on October ye 14: 1776 To Consider of a request from the Hon^ble Generall Court. Resolved as follows: that we Judge it best that ye Plan of Government by ye late Charter viz by the house of Representatives And Councill be still continued & strictly adhered to & that no alteration be made therein Respecting a form of Government at least during the present war."

This expression of opinion was elicited by a decree of the Provincial Congress, which, since the first events of the Revolution, assumed to act as the government. It had already ordered that legal writs and processes should no longer run in the name of the King, but in the name of "the government and people of the Massachusetts Bay in New England," and the towns had been requested to instruct their delegates on the subject of independence, and to empower them to adopt a new "frame of government."

The revolutionary cause had now become the fashion and craze of the day.[1] Open loy-

[1] "The American Revolution, like most others, was the work of an energetic minority who succeeded in committing an undecided and fluctuating majority to courses for which they had little love, and leading them step by step to a position from which it was impossible to recede."—*Lecky's England in the Eighteenth Century.*

alists, who were mainly of the most respectable and substantial class of citizens, had been driven out of the colonies, their property was to be confiscated, rebels were to be transformed into patriots, and the time had come when no man nor measures could reconcile the people of Massachusetts to British rule. In every town an organized system of intimidation, or bulldozing, was put in operation, the object of which was to coerce the agricultural population into permanent rebellion against Great Britain. It was first authorized by a resolve of the Great and General Court in February, 1776, directing the towns of Massachusetts to choose, by the written votes of persons qualified to vote in town meetings, a certain number of freeholders whose principles were known to be friendly to the "Rights and Liberties of America," to serve as a "Committee of Correspondence, Inspection, and Safety." William Rotch, in his memoirs of those times, says: "There were so many petty officers, as Committees of Safety, Inspection &c. in all parts, and too many of them chosen much upon the principle of Jeroboam's Priests, that we were sorely afflicted." Wareham elected this com-

mittee every year during the war. It was charged to ascertain what inhabitants violated the resolves, directions, or recommendations of the Continental Congress, or of the General Court, respecting the struggle with Great Britain. Such persons were to be arrested and confined in the county jail, "without the use of Fire or Candle Pen Ink & Paper or conversing with any Person whomsoever." The committee arrested those who said, "Damn the country!"[1] and those who sold tea, or who, in order to evade the stigma of "tory," drank it secretly in their families. They removed those whose residence in the town was thought to be incompatible with public safety; they filed information before the justices against persons

[1] "Information being given to this Committee that one Isaac Harper had behaved in a very unfriendly manner to his country, — Several Persons were sent for to be inquired of. Mr Thomas Moor attends, and informd the Committee that he heard said Harper Damn the Country. Mr William Daws attends and says that he had been often at Harpers House and discoursed him, and that he had heard him say that we were more arbitrary than the regulars — that he had rather be with them than us. Voted that complaint be entered with the Court of Enquiry against Isaac Harper of this Town as a Person inimical to the American States." — *Records of Boston Committee.*

whom they suspected; they watched channels through which information might be carried to the enemy, examined private letters, detained trading vessels and fishing boats, kept a list of persons capable of bearing arms, ordered them on parade, appointed officers to command them, fined those who failed to answer the muster roll, and from the ranks of this militia they drafted recruits for the Continental army.

There are no means of knowing how vigorously this committee worked in Wareham, as its records have not been found. But the records of a justice of the peace, commissioned by the new Commonwealth, indicate that the committee had to do with some of the most respectable residents of the town:—

"On ye Third Day of June 1778 in ye Name of ye Government and People of ye Masschussis Bay in New England Personally appeared Before me Noah Fearing Esqr one of ye Justices of ye Peace for ye County of Plymo David Besse and Joshua Crocker Both of Wareham and acknolidged themselves to stand Bound each in ye Sum of two hundred pounds For that Docr Andrew Mackie of Wareham Shall appear at ye next Inferior Court of General Sessions of ye peace to be holden at Barnstable within and for sd County

their to answer to an Inditement Found against him by ye Grand Jurey in April Courte Last. Noah Fearing Justice of ye Peace."

Bondsmen also appeared before this justice and bound themselves to produce Rowland Thacher and Martha Fearing of Wareham before the same court, whose next session was to be held "on ye Last Tuesday of this Instant June." As the records of this court were destroyed with the burning of the Barnstable court-house in October, 1827, no explanation of the proceedings can be made.

Nearly one hundred men of the town served in the war. Powder was bought for public use; and when,

> "In their ragged regimentals
> Stood the old Continentals
> Yielding not,
> While the grenadiers were lunging
> And like hail fell the plunging
> Cannon shot,"

the town sent clothing, rations, and recruits to support them. As the struggle was carried on at a distance, the townspeople suffered from none of its desolations, but they felt the great burden of the war in repeated calls for money, in the disturbance which it

produced in their ways and means of living, and in the yearly increase of the public taxes, which caused the prices of all articles to advance rapidly. In order to prevent traders from practicing extortion in the sale of the necessities of life, — after the manner of modern "trusts,"— the legislature passed an act under which "John Fearing Esquire Joshua Gibbs and David Nye were chosen to see that there Bee no Forestalling or Monopolizing in ye Towne." Nevertheless office-holding was not without profit. Two per cent. was paid in 1779 for "going to Boston to fetch the money due to the town," and frequent official journeys were made at public expense.[1]

[1] The following extract from a petition to the General Court in November, 1779, from "Several Towns in the County of Lincoln," may be considered as describing the condition of the rural population of Massachusetts at that time: "When we Look about us and behold the Distress of the People almost Destitute of most of the Necessaries of Life, no Exports or Imports by Sea as Usual in time past, whereby our wood and Lumber, the Little we got in our perplexd Circumstances Lays upon our hands, and no provision brought to us, and no money to purchase any with, we Stand amazd at the Prospect, and when we Look forward and behold the Monsterous Taxes that are Laid upon us, and no money to Pay it with, we are Astonishd & know not what to do." "We humbly trust we may

In 1780 the town was taxed £104 for the redemption of bills of credit and for paying interest in specie on notes issued by "the Province colony or now State of Massachusetts Bay;" and it was also taxed £8096 for defraying the public charges and carrying into execution the resolves of Congress. In the same year the town paid to each of its six months' recruits for the army, "sixty-nine silver dollars and one hundred and thirty dollars as mileage money." In 1781 it held a lottery "to raise two hundred and eighty hard dollars to raise soldiers with;" at the same time it sent nearly ten thousand pounds of beef to the Continental army. On the 11th of February, 1784, its war record was closed by ordering its British colors to be sold, and by voting "that the five years Pay granted to the Continental officers is Unjust and Ought Not to be Paid them." This opinion was universal with the rural population of Massachusetts, which had been impoverished by the war, and it found ex-

Decently petition that Power which has Taxed us Unrepresented, as we have a President from these Colonies of Partitioning the Parliament of Great Britan in a Similar Case."

pression in many resolves as bitter as those adopted by the neighboring town of Rochester: "That however the power of Congress may be we think the Grant by them made to sd officers was obtained by undue influence & if no Negative to sd Grant is yet to be admitted, notwithstanding all their good services we shall esteem them Public Nusances & Treat them in that Curracter."

The army had become a power greater than the State, and it was not ready to disband, after peace had been declared, without some unusual recognition of its importance. Abigail Adams, writing from Braintree in June, 1783, said: "Congress has commuted with the army by engaging to them five years' pay in lieu of half-pay for life. With security for this they will disband contented; but our wise legislators are about disputing the power of Congress to do either, without considering their hands in the mouth of the lion, and that, if the just and necessary food is not supplied, the outrageous animal may become so ferocious as to spread horror and devastation." So the farmers of Wareham and Rochester had reason for their opinions.

XIII.

TOWN LIFE AFTER THE WAR.

PEACE was welcomed by everybody. Although the town warrants ran no more in His Majesty's name, and the Revolution had effaced all marks of the royal authority, the customs and manners of the people had suffered no change. Farmers attended again to their own business — shipping away timber and firewood cut on the decrease of the moon, making salt by the evaporation of sea water, building vessels, increasing their flocks of sheep, gathering iron ore from the bottoms of ponds, making charcoal for forges recently set up, and nails from slit iron rods in their home smithies. To those who had been induced to neglect their farms for the sake of the war, peace brought many discouragements; and when stories came of fertile lands to be had in the region known as the Ohio, the pressure

of poverty, and perhaps of public opinion also, caused an emigration thither, and to the district of Maine, as well as to places less remote, of some who had been active in encouraging the war. From the following quaint soliloquy, written in Israel Fearing's account-book by a young woman descended from him, it may be inferred that many regrets were felt on leaving the ancestral homes: —

"The painful hour is fast approaching when I must say adieu to my native place. My home, days of my cherished youth farewell. The pain of sepperation is continually hovering on my mind when I must extend a parting hand to many dear relatives. The fond recollection of the many happy hours I have spent in their edefying company fill me with raptures, and now often drenches my eys in tears."

From early times there had been a path through bars and gates along the river's side from the centre village to the Narrows. It was opened as a highway after the Revolution, and until recent years it was a thoroughfare of sand, into which the ship-carpenter cast his chips, the harness-maker his scraps, the tinman his clippings, and the

butcher his bones. Now it is a smooth, broad road, hardened by oyster shells, on which summer visitors disport themselves in their equipages, and the owner of fast horses tries their speed. It ended at the ferry which was kept by a "sutable person" appointed by the town, who was allowed to charge two pence for a passage in his boat. From the ferry stones on the Agawame side of the river was an old road, called by the first planters the Woonkinco Way. Now, shaded by oaks, it is a pleasant way to the dwelling houses of urban families along the shore, whose yachts may be seen on summer days trolling the bay or bound on pleasure cruises.

Near the ferry at the Narrows several houses were built, on the close of the war, and one now standing has some celebrity as having been the home of John Kendrick, discoverer of the Columbia River, who sailed from Boston in 1787 as master of the ship Columbia. She returned in 1790, having, it is said, made the first American voyage around the world. Four Lombardy poplar-trees stood in front of the house, and the flood tides nearly reached its door-yard gate. Now its one solitary poplar looks down upon a busy street, which is

bordered on the harbor side by warehouses and wharves where schooners are discharging coal for iron-works, and corn and lumber for traders in Plymouth and Barnstable counties who come to Wareham for supplies.

After the war was over, the farmers continued to make their reckonings in colonial shillings and pence. They called the quarter of the Spanish milled dollar a "one-and-six," the eighth was a ninepence, the sixteenth a fourpence or "fopensapny;" and the coins into which the dollar was divided were kept in circulation until the marks of their origin in the mint of Spain were almost obliterated. Their method of trading with each other is shown by the settlement of an account with a shoemaker, which began in 1780 and ended in 1803. It was credited every year with shoemaking for the family, and was debited from time to time with salt-hay, cheese, mutton, molasses, corn, tallow, sheep's wool, hire of horse, hauling firewood, sole-leather, a goose, wheat, candles, sugar, rye, pork, and three shillings.

Money was not abundant; farm products were the staple values, and were exchangeable at the village stores for merchandise. Sugar,

tea, molasses, rum, and other comforts thus obtained, were kept on hand by thrifty farmers to be used in paying for hired labor.

Undisturbed by the political questions of the times, the Wareham farmers kept the noiseless tenor of their way as their fathers had done under the rule of the King. In early spring alewives came into the rivers, and for a while formed the staple of trade and conversation. Their annual return "with such longing desire after the fresh water ponds" — as an old chronicler writes — was the most important event of the year. At the birth of the town the prosperity of alewives was a public concern; and from that day to this, these historic fishes have aroused the state legislature, have vexed town meetings, and have formed a platform on which the rising politician has aired his wisdom.

The Woonkinco River, fed by cold springs in Plymouth Woods, and having no ponds at its source, was not inviting to migratory fish; for these reasons, the yield from it was always insignificant, while the Weweantet and Agawame rivers, flowing out of large ponds, furnished attractive spawning grounds, and in these rivers the town's fishery yielded

large results. Two kinds of alewives came to the rivers: the larger, coming first, sought the Weweantet, swarming in the deep ravine called the Poles in such numbers that it was impossible for more than a small portion of them to pass up stream during an ebbing tide; the smaller, called black-backs, tarried in the bay until the temperature of the rivers became warmer, and then they invariably entered the Agawame.

In colonial times the March town meeting[1]

[1] "The Town meet att the Day and time Sot att the adjurdment. The Modarater Put to vote whether the town was for Haveing 410 Barels of hering Cetcht out of ye several Streems In Wareham ye Present year for markit Provide the men that Cetcht them would Pay to ye town four shillings Bountey on each Barel for ye youse of the town and ye vote Past in the Affarmitive.

oute of Weantet River	300
oute of agewam River	80
oute of wampinco River	8
oute of Cohasit Crick socaled	16
oute of ye Brook By micah Gibbs	6
	410

the men that appeard in meeting to Cetch ye herings and Give ye 4 pr Barel Capt fering for his suns Decon Joshua Gibbs for himself & Suns Rowland Swift for himself Butler Wing for himself and ye other men Concernd with him In ye fishing affare." — *Wareham Records*, March 31, 1747.

fixed the number of alewives to be caught and the price to be paid by the catchers. In later years a change of this custom has added an important day to the town's calendar; the day when, at the tavern, is sold by auction to the highest bidder the exclusive right to catch alewives on three days of the week between sunrise and sunset. On these days the buyer of the right is obligated to sell four hundred alewives — generally called "herrin'" — for sixty-four cents to each householder applying for them, and to give to all widows in the town a barrel-full of the fish without price. The cruel tradition is that this "bar'l o'herrin" has sometimes appeared to be, as respects the support of a dependent family, a full compensation to the widow for the loss of him of whom she was bereft.

After the townspeople had pickled and dried their alewives and strung them on twigs, and hung them, away from the reach of domestic animals, in wood-sheds and barn-lofts, the season of sheep-shearing came, accompanied with northeast winds and fogs from the sea; a weather called from generation to generation "the sheep-storm." In town-meeting warrants there was always a stroke

about sheep, and orders were made that they shall "not run at large on the Commons from shear time til ye Twentyeth of December & if any ram shall Be taken up the Owner Shall forfeit & Pay One dollar." To protect them while pasturing in the woods, the town kept four hounds and paid a bounty for every fox's head brought in.

In the autumn, salt grass, shell fish, and cider were cared for. In the winter, firewood was cut, nails were wrought in the smithies, charcoal was made, the shoemaker and the schoolmaster went their round of visits. All the year through, intentions of marriage were screamed in the meeting-house. The town clerk certified each intention in his best style of handwriting, and the minister, or the justice of the peace, took the certificate and three shillings, performed a marriage ceremony, and drank a bumper to the new man and wife.

The records of a justice of the peace beginning in 1804 show that the jurisdiction of this court was more extensive than it had been before the war. On his farm he vegetated without a law library, but by his common sense maintaining a tribunal before which

eminent lawyers pleaded causes. Once a year the town officers came before him to take the oath of office, as their predecessors came before his father to swear allegiance to King George the Second. But now it was required of the town constables to subscribe an oath before the justice, in which they did "renounce and adjure all allegiance subjection and obèdience to the King, Queen, or Government of Great Britain, and every other foreign power whatsoever."

The sessions of this court were held in the dwelling-house on Fearing Hill. Hither came plaintiffs and defendants from the village and from neighboring towns to lay their cases before the justice, who was known in all the region as the Squire, and the witnesses loitered by the lilac-trees at the front door while they waited a summons to come into his presence. If the defendant did not appear at the time appointed for trial, his name was solemnly called three times, and, no response being heard, judgment was immediately entered against him. The wardens brought in all the boys and girls whom they had seen laughing in the meeting-house, and the Squire fined the girls five shillings and the

boys ten, for they were able to laugh louder than the girls. Persons against whom complaint had been made for traveling on Sunday, for raking hay on the Lord's Day, for cursing a townsman, or swearing in the presence of a neighbor, were brought here to pay the fines assessed by law for the benefit of the town's poor. He who had been overtaken with strong liquor confessed his error to the Squire and paid to him the penalty in colonial shillings. Here the constables brought the culprit who had pulled an orchard, or had stolen a sheep, or had willfully knocked down a neighbor, spat in his face, pinched his nose, rubbed his ears, or otherwise maliciously dishonored him. The Squire tried the man accused of obstructing the passage of alewives up the town's rivers, as well as the man who had failed to appear in the ranks of the train-band, according to orders, on training day. He listened to the suit of the schoolteacher for her wages of one dollar a week, and to the claim for damages to her dignity because the committeeman had locked her out of the schoolhouse. He took the affirmation of the mother of a bastard child, certified the oath of the admin-

istrator of a widow's estate, recorded in solemn form confessions of debt, in which the debtor pledged that the debt should be paid out of his goods, chattels, lands, and tenements, "and in want thereof of my body." He issued writs against insolvent debtors by which they were put into the county jail, condemned others who could not satisfy a creditor's claim to a year's labor in the creditor's service, and he "married together" those who came to him to be married.

It was a custom of the town to put incompetent persons under a guardian, and to exercise parental authority over those who, according to public opinion, stood in need of it. A case of this sort is described in the records as "that business concerning Noah Bump's daughter, that married a certain Frye," which the town took in hand in 1794. This certain Frye was an uncertain vagrant who had obtained employment on the farms and whom an indigent daughter of Noah had married, instead of marrying a coachman as she probably would have done had she lived at the present time. What the town did with the twain is not known. But the consequences of the business were tragical,

and illustrative of the heredity of pauperism. Years afterwards, in a drunken brawl the wife was killed by the husband, and the support of their pauper descendants is to this day contested judicially between Wareham and the neighboring towns into which they drift.

In 1801 smallpox appeared and caused great alarm. It was ordered by the town "to set up Inoculating," and a house was taken "for to Inoculate in," to which families resorted, and where they were fed on bread and molasses while passing through a course of smallpox, as was the custom of the times.

Every spring the keeping of the town's poor was sold by auction with their children and chattels, if they had any, and the sales were recorded in the town clerk's book. For example: "Vandued the Child of Lynda that was before she was married the Child she had on Nantucket. Bid in by Ezra Swift at 59 Centes pr week to be clothed fed & nursed by sd Ezra — the Docter's bil by the Town — til neaxt anuel meeting if not taken away suner." It was a nameless child, needing a home, a nurse and a doctor, farmed out to labor by the week, if not taken away sooner by death! Another hard-hearted sale by auc-

tion was: — "the Suporting of the widder of the late Jonathan perrey and Child & also two more of the youngest Children and also one Cow & one heifer" — a curious herding of children and cattle.[1] Later it was voted in town meeting "to put up the poor in lump or together, and if," says the record, "they will not go five dollars lower why then they are to go separately." This attempt to cheapen the cost of supporting them failed; and the widows were again set up at auction annually, and sold "to be kept one year their clothing to be kept in repair and to be returned as they now are." The sales were made in the bar-room of the inn, where the landlord, as he served the thirsty guests from his decanters, discussed with them the value of the services of the paupers for whose keeping they had come to bid. The sales records ran as follows: —

1814 — "Jurned from the meeting-house down to Benjamin Fearings house to vandue the poor

[1] The town records show many transactions which would now be considered as scandalous: William Perce was paid fifty dollars "for keeping his mother," and eight dollars and eight cents "for supplying his father;" and the town also gave him two hundred and sixty dollars, for which he "promised to support his mother during her natural life."

— the boy Lynda Boyer brot from Nantucket bid of to John Bates at 95 Dollars to be kept til 21 yeares the money to be paid in saven yeares in proportion yearly — the Wd and Daughter Bethany Barrowes bid to prince Burges at $84 & one half Dollars for one year to clothe victual & Docter & nurse her — Salome Bump bid of by James Leonard at 38 Dollares & 75 Centes for one year to cloth & nurse & pay the Docteres bil — the Wd Mary Bump bid of by Ebenezer Raymond at 40 Dollares for one year to vittle and cloth & nurse & Doctor her."

1819 — "Voted to vandue some of the poore Children such as could not be put out. The Fry girl was bid of by Moses S. Fearing at $89 to be paid by proposion acording to the number of yeares he keepes her. The perry boy and girl bid of by Joseph Gibbs at fifty nyne Dollares to be paid in proposion. One boy bid of by Joshua Gibbs at Seventy nyne Centes pr week."

1822. "Voted not to build a poor or work-house. Ada Bumpas was then set up to be kept untill next March meeting and was bid off by Curtis Tobey for $1 pr week."

A condition of the sales was that the buyers should pay the doctor's bills; a condition often disregarded, and when the unpaid doctor sent his bills to the town meeting they

were sharply criticised; and when Peter Mackie, the town physician, rebelled against this treatment, it was proposed that he should doctor all the paupers for twenty-five dollars a year. "And he agreed to do it for that sum," triumphantly wrote the town clerk in the town records.

Physic was held in veneration. It was a custom of all well-regulated families, in the spring, to take large purges of senna, or mixtures of brimstone, rhubarb, and molasses. In a serious illness cupping and leeching were resorted to; mercury was administered until the teeth became loose; water was denied to the sufferer in a raging fever, and salt clam juice was offered to assuage thirst. One might have an aching tooth jerked out by the fall of a ten-pound weight tied to it, or the pain might be destroyed by pressing quicklime into the cavity. But fortunately the race was hardy, and many people lived to an old age in spite of the doctor and his nostrums. Those who died in old age were said to have died "of a hectical decay." Other causes of death noted in the church records were: "of the numb palsie; of a dropsical consumption; of the quimsey; of a carking

humour about the throat; of a putrid fever; of a canker rash; of a perizeneumony; of a stoppage by eating cherries; of a yellow nervous fever; of a carbuncle; of a cramp in her stomach; of a mortification."

When the war was ended there were no conveniences for traveling to other towns. The roads, overgrown by trees, were more suitable for horses than for wheeled vehicles. A coach began to run regularly from New Bedford to Boston in 1797, the trees on each side of the highway having been trimmed to make room for it to pass; but as Wareham was not on its route, a post-rider rode once a week through the town, calling at the inn for letters and connecting with the coach. This was the only line of communication with Boston for many years, except by sea.

The isolated position of the town did not hinder its prosperity. Farms were fertile, shipyards touched homesteads at the Narrows, where freighting and whaling vessels were built. The owners of these were the thrifty farmers, tradesmen, and mechanics of the town, who were able to furnish, for the building of a ship, timber from their lands, materials from their stores, and labor with

their own hands. The abundant fisheries in Buzzard's Bay and its influent streams also contributed to the town's prosperity. Colonial laws restricted the use of seines and nets in these fisheries; and although similar laws are now in force, contraband fishermen are sometimes discovered in the bay, at early dawn, filling their sloops with fish unlawfully taken.

The Woonkinco River entered the bay by a deep channel, and the harbor was often astir with sloops, schooners, and ships arriving and departing. Small sailing vessels from the bay passed up the Weweantet River to the "brickkiln landing," near Blackmer's Pond, where bricks were made, and farmers landed crops gathered on the bay shores. Squire Fearing's farm included lands in Agawame, and as they were six or seven miles from his dwelling-house, the crops were brought to this landing, and carted thence to his barns. One autumn, as the story goes, he had corn to be harvested on the island off Fearing Neck, and his neighbor, Captain Uriah Savery, had a sloop which the Squire hired to bring home the corn; having assured the captain that he knew the channels and could

pilot the way to the island. They started from the landing and easily ran down the river to Great Hill. After passing this promontory the Squire lost the way. Looking across the bay, all the headlands and coves appeared alike to him, and he could recognize no landmark by which to direct a course. He gave the captain orders to steer in so many diverse directions that the old mariner was convinced that this justice of the peace, who dispensed the laws of the Commonwealth from Fearing Hill, was more of a farmer than a navigator. In his humiliation the Squire confessed that he did not know the marine way to the island, but he had often gone to it by land and swum his carts and oxen across the channel. The captain put the sloop before the wind, and running her towards Tempest Knob had the good fortune to make Fearing Neck. As they passed along the shores not a landmark was recognized by the Squire. Suddenly he vindicated his claim to be a pilot by exclaiming: "Uriah! Uriah! I told ye I knew the way; there's old Macmanaman and his striped oxen on the shore for sartin!"

XIV.

THE BRITISH RAID.

THE second war with Great Britain, declared by Congress in June, 1812, excited no interest in the town. Public sentiment throughout Plymouth County was not only opposed to it, but found vent in resolutions which, if they had been made in 1776, would have caused those who made them to be expatriated as tories. Public meetings proclaimed it "to be disrespectful in the inhabitants" to do anything for the prosecution of the war, and that they would "support each other against all attempts of whatsoever nature to injure them for anything they rightfully do or say." A spirit of independence was everywhere exhibited, which would not have been allowed expression in the years when a "Committee of Correspondence, Inspection and Safety" tyrannized over all personal opinions.

A Wareham schooner bound home from Turk's Island in the Bahamas, and another outward bound to Brazil, had been captured by the enemy; but as hostilities were confined mainly to the coast of the Southern States, the town considered itself secure in its isolated position. This illusion was dispelled on Monday morning the 13th of June, 1814, when the British brig-of-war Nimrod came up the bay and anchored near Bird Island. She belonged to a blockading squadron which for several months had worked off and on the coast, foraging at unprotected places, seizing small craft, and harassing the commerce of Newport, Nantucket, and New Bedford. A few days previous her boats had come up the bay and cut out three sloops belonging to Wareham and carried them off.

From her anchorage the Nimrod sent away six boats containing 220 armed men; they spread lateen-sails, and with a fair wind and a flood tide, filled away for Wareham. Their coming was discovered by a man on the beach at Crooked River, who rowed over to the Narrows and told the selectmen. An alarm was sounded through the town, housewives buried their silver spoons and porrin-

gers in gardens, and some of the inhabitants assembled at the inn to consider what they should do. As an armed resistance was impossible, they sent a white flag to meet the boats at the landing. The British marched up the road unopposed, set fire to a cotton factory and to several vessels, and then departed as they came.

News-gatherers were quickly abroad, and the Boston newspapers were furnished with various accounts of the raid.[1] A brief account

[1] "Fairhaven, June 14. Yesterday morning we were alarmed by the appearance of the British brig Nimrod with 7 barges with her manned from the 74 now lying at Quick's Hole. About 8 o'clock she bore away up the Bay and as we supposed was bound into Rochester. We therefore with a party of men proceeded with a small canon to assist the citizens, but the brig had come to an anchor and manned 6 barges with about 150 men and proceeded to Wareham where they arrived at 12 o'clock and destroyed 12 or 13 sail of vessels, among them a new ship and a brig. They set fire to the factory and left it soon, when the people collected and put it out." — *New England Palladium.*

June 16th, 1814. "A gentleman from Plymouth states that on Monday about 200 men in 6 barges from a 74 and the Nimrod brig came in to Wareham and set fire to seven vessels, three or four of which were consumed. The others and a factory which was likewise set on fire were extinguished." — *Boston Daily Advertiser.*

June 18th, 1814. "We learn by gentlemen from Wareham that the 13th inst. several British barges landed about

of it was sent to a New Bedford newspaper by two of the selectmen: —

"WAREHAM, June 14.

"*To the editor of the New Bedford Mercury.*

"SIR — Yesterday morning we were informed of the approach of the enemy, and at about 11 o'clock A. M. they landed at the village called the Narrows, with a flag. There were six barges containing two hundred and twenty men. They demanded (before the proper authority could arrive) all the public property; and declared, that in case they were molested, every house within their reach should be consumed. We were not prepared to make any opposition, and promised not to. To prevent a violation on our part, they detained a number of men and boys as prisoners for their security; declaring that if any of their men were injured, they should be put to immediate death. Having stationed sentries back of

200 men at that place about noon. They proceeded to setting fire to a large ship and an elegant brig on the stocks, which they said was intended for a privateer, and several other vessels. They threw a rocket into a cotton factory which they said they considered public property. They did not molest the fishing craft, and seeing the name of Washington on the stern of one of the vessels, one of them ordered it to be burnt. One officer exclaimed — 'Not a hair of the head of this vessel shall be scorched,' and she was spared." — *Columbian Centinel.*

the village, they proceeded to fire the vessels and cotton manufactory. Twelve vessels were fired, five of which were totally destroyed; the remainder were extinguished after the enemy departed. The cotton manufactory was also extinguished.

"Damage estimated at 20,000 dollars. It is supposed that the enemy came from the Nimrod brig, and Superb 74.

BENJA. BOURNE, } *selectmen of*
BENJA. FEARING, } *Wareham.*"

A more detailed account was sent by some of the inhabitants to Commodore Perry. It was as follows:—

"WAREHAM, June 21, 1814.

"To commodore Perry. Sir — The following is a correct statement when the British landed at this place with their barges the 13th of this inst. June. We the undersigned do testify and say, that on the 13th of this inst. June, about 11 o'clock, A. M. we saw the British with six barges approaching this village with a white flag hoisted in one of them at which time our flag was not hoisted, but Thomas Young was carrying it down the street towards the wharf, where it was afterwards hoisted. We the undersigned do further testify and say, that on the landing of the commanding officer from the barge where our flag was hoisted, he the commanding officer did agree

that if he was not fired on by the inhabitants that he would not destroy any private property belonging to the inhabitants; but he would destroy public property which did not belong to the town, and requested one of us to point out the Falmouth property or vessels, which we agreed to do, and one of us went into the barge with the second in command, and then they took down their flag of truce and proceeded to set fire to the Falmouth vessels. They then landed a part of their men, and in violation of their agreement proceeded to set fire to private property, by setting fire to a vessel on the stocks and five others which were at anchor and a Plymouth vessel. They were reminded of their agreement, and that they had taken advantage of us by false promises, but they threatened to set fire to the village, and put the inhabitants to the sword if any resistance was made or any attempts made to put out the fires, for they did not care about any promises they had made, also they landed a party of men and set fire to a cotton manufactory. They then returned to their barges, took twelve of the inhabitants with them on board their barges, and said if they were fired upon by the inhabitants they would put them to death. Then the commanding officer ordered the flag of truce to be hoisted, and the second in command swore it was

a damned shame and disgrace to any nation to enter a village under a flag of truce and commit the greatest outrage and depredations possible, and then return under a flag of truce, but on orders being again given by the commanding officer the flag of truce was hoisted. Our men were landed about three miles below the village, and the barges proceeded on board the brigantine Nimrod, then lying in the bay.

David Nye, jr.	Noble Everett,
Abner Basset,	Wm. Barrows,
Isaac Perkins,	Perez Briggs,
Josiah Everett,	Wm. Fearing.

"P. S. This is known only by the undersigned, no other person being present, that is, that the British fired three muskets under the flag of truce before the agreement.

Abner Basset,
David Nye, jr."

The twelve hostages were set free near Nobska Bluff on Cromeset, where the rivers meet the bay. From this point the boats were watched, on their return to the Nimrod, until they disappeared around the point of Great Hill. Then the little village at the Narrows aroused itself for defense. There was a mustering of the militia, rifle pits to

command the channels were dug, and sentinels were posted to keep watch and ward against another surprise from the sea.

Although this raid attracted attention from all parts of the country, and was commented upon as an unnatural retaliation for the neutrality of Wareham, the town having furnished neither a man nor a gun for service against the British, during the war, up to this date, the town records are silent about it. The only allusion to it is to be found in the treasurer's account-book, in which, under the date of 1815, it is written: "Paid Archippus Leonard for standing guard when the British landed, seventy one cents." And that sum was all that the British raid drew out of the town treasury.

XV.

THE TOWN'S BASS-VIOL.

A GLIMPSE of the congregation in the meeting-house, in the early part of this century, is revealed in an old sermon, which mentions "Mackie at the holy supper reading off the hymn in Scottish style, Fearing in the gallery leading the choir with a loud voice, Savery with white locks bending over his staff, Nye with powdered wig like an English judge, the aged men and women sitting in front of the pulpit in open seats, mothers with babes in their arms seated in chairs in the porch."

To this congregation the propriety of using a bass-viol in the services of worship was an ever-present question. When new ideas about church music reached Wareham, in 1794, the question was considered by the church, and after the town meeting had been consulted, it was decided, "Notwithstanding

the opposition of some, to have the Bass viol used." This decision aroused that Puritan prejudice which classed the use of musical instruments in worship as an abomination; and therefore the church called a meeting to reconsider the question, when it was voted "that it is expedient that a Bass vial should not be used."

Nevertheless the instrument held its place in the choir until 1796, when, by an order of town meeting, it was put out of the meeting-house. It remained outside, making various attempts to get in, until 1802; then a request for its readmission was considered, and the church was induced to vote, in April, "that we are willing that the singers should make use of the Bass vial on trial till next sacrament lecture." On a second request the church refused to grant any further indulgence. The singers then went to the September town meeting, and obtained "Leave for the Bass Vial to be brought into ye meeting-house to be Played On every other Sabbath to begin the next Sabbath & to Play if chosen every Sabbath in the Intermission between meetings and Not to Pitch the Tunes on the Sabbaths that it don't Play."

The town's bass-viol, like the song of the sirens, lured many pilgrims to forget the country to which they were going; and they so far renounced their loyalty as to turn away from the meeting-house on those Sundays when the instrument was to be heard therein. The most obstinate of these pilgrims was Captain Joshua Gibbs. From the outset he would neither listen to it nor make a compromise with it. "The thing is an abomination," he said. "Can't we sing in meeting without sich a screeching and groaning? My father and grandfather worshiped God in Wareham without a bars vile. I won't abide it!"

The church asked the town to stop it; and in October, 1803, the town meeting ordered "Ye use of the Bass Vial in Publick Worship to be stopped." Then the singers and their allies stayed at home on Sundays, leaving nothing for the town to do but to turn around again; which it did in February, 1804, when, as the records say, —

"The Town met & 1^{ly} Voted to have Singing in the time of Publick worship.

" 2^{ly} Voted that ye Singers Shall appoint their head Singer.

"3^{ly} voted to make use of the Bass Viol the one half of the Time & to begin with ye Viol next Sabbath day."

Years passed, and through them all the bass-viol held its place in the meeting-house, and its enemies kept themselves safely beyond the sound of its strings.[1] In 1826 a church meeting was called to consider the case of some members who for a long time had neglected to attend public worship. "Three of those brethren," say the church records, "being present, stated that the reason of their withdrawing themselves from public worship with the church, was the use of instrumental music in singing." It was proposed to submit their case to an ecclesiastical council,[2] when Joshua Gibbs, who had become a deacon of the church, refused to submit his grievances to the decision of

[1] "Decem. 13. 1807. The church tarried and Voted that the singers be requested not to make use of the Bass viol in public worship in the meeting house unless they give Cap. Joshua Gibbs, or his family in case of his absence, previous notice." — *Wareham Church Records.*

[2] The Council advised "the Church in behalf of their aggrieved brethren, respectfully to request the Society to discontinue the use of instrumental music, particularly on days of communion."

any council, and abruptly left the meeting; and such was the power of his obstinacy that this disloyalty was allowed to pass without further notice.

When the church was reorganized, in 1828, and was taking possession of a new meeting-house, the bass-viol appeared at the threshold like a ghost from colonial times. A new generation had inherited the prejudice against it, and William Mackie, Nathaniel Crocker, and Abisha Barrows were sent to the singers with an offer to give fifty dollars a year for the support of a choir, if the choir would sing without musical instruments. Their errand was unsuccessful. Again the controversy was renewed in 1829, but the church had become weary of it. The spirit which for thirty-five years had kept up the revolt was broken; and the venerable Deacon Gibbs went to his grave leaving the town's bass-viol triumphant in the meeting-house.

XVI.

FINAL TRANSFORMATIONS.

THE manners and customs of colonial times lingered on into the present century, until enterprising men,[1] who had come into the town bringing capital, began to erect cotton-mills and iron-works on the dams where, for more than a hundred years, the farmers had sawn their logs and ground their corn. These new enterprises created new centres of population, and quickened the social life of the community; and when the manufacture of iron hoops for the oil-casks of whaling-ships, and of iron nails by machinery, was begun in 1821, the town was awakened to a new and noisy existence. A brisk commerce enlivened the bay between Wareham and New Bedford, conveying

[1] The Tobeys, Pratts, Murdocks, Lincolns, and Leonards.

Swedes iron for the rolling-mills, and returning hoops to the whalemen's town. Packets, — one of which bore the ferocious name of "Galloping Tiger," — loaded with nails, sailed regularly to New York, and brought back ores, blooms, flour, West India goods, and cotton. Cotton shirtings made in the Wareham mills for slaves' use were shipped direct to buyers in Virginia. Schooners loaded with iron wares from the Wareham furnaces sailed to the Kennebec and Penobscot, the Connecticut and Hudson, to retail them in the river towns. Trade increased at the harbor, shipbuilding yards were enlarged, and the little landing-places formerly existing alongshore became substantial wharves of stone extending into the edge of deep water.

The antique meeting-house felt this enterprising spirit. Its outside was painted, and its neglected surroundings were cleared up. Carters were forbidden to leave their ore-laden wagons near it, and farmers were forbidden to cord firewood about it. Inside the house on Sunday there was the sound of fiddles and a showy parade of singers in the galleries. The oaken benches bordering the great alley were taken away, and one of the

three outside doors was permanently closed. In the spaces thus acquired pews were built, which were sold by auction at high prices, the town clerk having been cautioned "to give no Deeds till the money is paid." The new-comers demanded that the money received for new pews should be used to build a steeple and to buy a bell. To this the farmers objected, and as they were a majority in the town meeting, it was there voted "Not to build a steeple neither buy a bell."

The meeting-house had never had a warming. During winter its interior was as cold as a refrigerator; sometimes so cold that no service of worship was attempted. Parson Thacher wrote in the church records: "February 21. 1773. This was a remarkable cold Sabbath. Some by their glasses found it to be many degrees colder than ever was known. Many were froze. I myself coming home from meeting had my face touched with frost, so that we had no meeting in the afternoon."

When wintry winds whistled through the crannies of the meeting-house, and flying snow drifted under its doors and darkened its rattling windows, the rigors of the Mosaic law were preached to an audience shiv-

ering upon the brink of the freezing-point. Women found some comfort by resting their feet upon iron boxes filled with embers brought from their homes. Men shrugged themselves into as small a space as possible; while the preacher, encased in a great-coat and mittens, stood at his post of duty as if determined to answer the Psalmist's question, "Who can stand before His cold?"

The selectmen proposed "to purchase a stove and pipes and furnish wood and attendance" for the meeting-house. But the majority in town meeting, believing, it may be presumed, that the preaching ought to be hot enough to warm the house, voted "Not to purchase a stove and pipes. Not to furnish wood and attendance." As descendants of colonial farmers they could read their "title clear to mansions in the skies," without the aid of fires and bells.

Although the meeting-house was cold, church discipline was active enough to warm the thoughts of erring members, who, when brought to a condition of penitence, were required to make confessions in public, as was the custom in former times. A young man, who probably, as the song says,

"Danced all night, till the broad daylight,
And went home with the girls in the morning,"

became conscience-stricken; and, being a member of the church, sought and obtained its forgiveness. The records of 1823 state that "Harvey Bumpus, having a short time since mingled with the world in the frivolous amusement of dancing, came forward and made a confession which was read and accepted." One stood up and confessed that she had been "guilty of a breach of the seventh commandment;" another sinner, well advanced in years, confessed that he had "indulged to excess in the use of ardent spirits."

Intemperate drinking was not unusual in New England towns. Ministers, as well as parishioners, drank rum moderately, or otherwise. At the stores it was sold for two shillings and three pence the gallon, and a decanter of it was at hand in the living-room of every dwelling-house. At an ordination, a wedding, a funeral, a house-raising, a launching, a husking, it was freely offered. If two men went to the salt meadows to mow, or into the woods to fell trees, they carried a pint of rum as a matter of course. Although

farm laborers worked from sunrise to sunset, if a job was to be done after the day's work was over, a sufficient compensation to the men was an invitation to "Come in and take a grog!" During the haying season it was a custom of the farmer to go to the meadows at eleven o'clock in the forenoon and at four o'clock in the afternoon, carrying a tumbler and a decanter of rum for the refreshment of his laborers. In 1830, through the influence of the church, a society to promote temperance in drinking was organized in Wareham; and to "sign the pledge" was then believed to be, for the signer, a complete riddance from the sin of drunkenness.

Annually, in April, the governor's fast-day was observed by going to the meeting-house to listen to a long sermon; and in November Thanksgiving day was observed by a similar service, followed by the cheer of an ample dinner at home, for which preparations had been going on for a long time. But Easter and Christmas were unknown. Reminiscences of Christmas festivals as described in London story-books may have caused a child, here and there, to hang up its stockings by the kitchen fireplace, which was spacious enough

to allow the entrance of Santa Claus and all his reindeers. He never came to fill the stockings, and childish faith was turned into unbelief. In the opinion of fathers and mothers, any special observance of Christmas day was a deference to the Pope of Rome.

Still, social life was far from being gloomy. There were frolicsome assemblies for husking corn and paring apples ; there were afternoon quilting-bees, and evenings enlivened by romping games, such as blindman's-buff and spin-the-platter. The sports and pastimes of these evening parties not unfrequently bordered on rudeness ; the youthful merrymakers running a gauntlet, dashing through files of their companions who, with uplifted hands and waving arms, cut off the progress of the willing victim, while all sang :

> "The needle's eye that doth supply
> The thread that runs so true,
> It hath caught many a fair young heart,
> And now it hath caught you."

Others, joining hands and wildly swinging around in giddy rings, chanted "Green grow the rushes, O" ; all the measures of the chant being zestfully marked, and interspersed with kisses. It was a common custom to

invite neighbors or kindred "to spend the day," the guests arriving at nine o'clock; women prepared for knitting and needlework, the elder men prepared to talk about wool, cattle, and crops. At noon a bountiful dinner was served for them, the great oven having been fired the day before, and at five o'clock in the afternoon the supper-table was spread with all the varieties of cake, pastry, and sweetmeat for which the hostess was noted. In winter evenings there were sleighing parties that pulled up at the tavern to drink mulled wine; there were voluntary singing clubs; there were neighborhood gatherings of young people, who, seated in a semicircle around the large glowing fireplace, passed the hours in telling fortunes, drinking cider, cracking nuts, and eating apples, whose peels, pared off without a break, were twirled around the parer's head, and, falling on the floor, were supposed to form the initial letter of somebody's husband that was to be. A joyful event was the arrival of a son from the city, whose tailor-made clothes and dandified airs were the pride of his mother; or of a son returned from a whaling voyage, his sea-chest stored with shells and curiosities

from the islands of the Pacific Ocean, and perhaps bringing a piece of China crape or India muslin for his sister's wedding-dress. Weddings were important events in the social life of the town. Special journeys were made to Boston or New York to buy the outfit, and brides were often arrayed in gowns of such richness that those which have been preserved to the present day are held as heirlooms of great value. Although the church looked upon dancing with disfavor, there were balls at the tavern occasionally, where young beaus prided themselves on the dexterity with which they "cut the pigeon wing," and whirled through the measures of "money-musk" and Sir Roger de Coverley. At evening parties, too, the guests were accustomed to join hands with the hosts in a "dance around the chimney," passing from room to room, a merry go-round of old and young. Going to meeting on Sunday morning was also a social enjoyment. It was like going to a country-side gathering of friends and neighbors. The meeting-house door was the Sunday newspaper containing, as in former times, all kinds of announcements interesting to the congrega-

tion; and the noon-time intermission furnished the great opportunity when women who had received the latest fashions from Boston could see each other in their new bonnets and "dandy-gray russets," and could humanize their minds by an unlimited range over the fields of gossip.

So old-fashioned were the farmers that new appliances for saving work were not in favor. Farming tools were wrought on the anvil of the village blacksmith, and so were the plowshare and the iron straps binding it to the mold-board. The well-to-do farmer kept a horse and shay, but it was only for hire and to carry the women folks to meeting. To him time was not money, and if he must go to a neighboring town he preferred to walk the distance rather than devote the establishment to his own use for the journey, except on unusual occasions. Clothing material was made on the farms. On the kitchen hearth stood dye tubs in which fleeces were colored red and blue. The industrious wife and her daughters were skilled in carding the wool, spinning it into yarns, and weaving the yarns into cloths, which, after passing through the fulling-mill, were made into clothing for the

family. They also made fine linen from flax grown in their own fields. The shoes of the family were also a home product. Hides sent to a tannery remained in the vats a year, the tanner taking one half of them for his work; when the leather was sent to the house, a shoemaker was summoned, who made and repaired for every member of the family shoes enough to last a year, taking in payment for his labor various products of the farm.

When the farmer made his last will and testament he began it "In the name of God," declaring that he was now "of a disposing mind and memory," and expressing his religious faith by the following language: —

"In the first place I give and bequeath my immortal spirit to God who gave it and my body to the earth to be buried in a decent Christian burial with a comfortable hope that at the general resurrection it will be raised in a glorious state."

To his wife he gives "the use and improvement of one third part" of his real estate and household furniture, with perhaps "two cows, one riding beast, ten sheep," and a seat in the family pew in the meeting-house. To his unmarried daughter he gives "the privilege," or exclusive use, of a designated

chamber in his dwelling-house, with a feather bed and furniture, so long as she lives unmarried, with storage space in the cellar, laundry space in the lean-to, a seat in the family pew, "firewood for one fire cut at the door, sixteen bushels of Indian corn and four bushels of rye a year, all to be provided by her brothers equally between them." To his oldest son he gives the homestead, land and buildings, subject to the mother's and daughter's privileges, and he divides the remainder of his estate between all his sons. On his gravestone, set up in the old churchyard where his ancestors were buried, some pious rhymes were carved, expressing the belief of mourning hearts: —

> "So sleep the saints and cease to groan,
> When sin and death have done their worst.
> Christ hath a glory like his own,
> Which waits to clothe their waking dust."

In those days there was no mania for traveling, no longing for fashionable resorts at "the springs" or in the mountains, to destroy the charm of village life. Perhaps once a year a farmer with his wife journeyed to Boston in the family shay, a little hair-covered trunk containing their best clothing

strapped to its axle, to make a brief visit to relatives. But families generally stayed at home, excepting the daughter who found a husband in another town, and those restless sons who longed to see Boston, — from which news came at regular intervals by a stage-coach and a six-horsed baggage wagon, — or who hankered after the sea and gladly trudged afoot to New Bedford to join a whaling ship and pursue their sea dreams beyond Cape Horn. Occasionally one of the home-staying daughters became so skilled in needlework that her services were sought for by neighbors, the usual compensation for a day's labor being her diet with sixteen cents in winter and twenty cents in summer. Children were taught to work as soon as they were taught anything, and some, contented with their labors, grew to be men and women before they had crossed the boundaries of the town; while others, more ambitious, having inherited the sterling qualities and steady habits which this honest mode of life produced, sought serious occupation in distant cities, where they became the founders of prosperous families, distinguished in social and in commercial life.

The farmhouses were low, rectangular, built around a large square central chimney. Beneath them were spacious cellars for the storage of various products of the farm and other household supplies, with which the thrifty farmer was abundantly provided. Near or connected with the dwellings were barns, cart-sheds, corn-cribs, and wood-piles. A picket fence, or a rough stone wall, separated the highway from the front door, and a straight path divided the turf between.

> "Adown the path the poppies flamed,
> Stiff box made green the border,
> And sweet blue violets, half-ashamed,
> Grew low in wild disorder."

At last — it was in 1847 — a railroad from Boston, creeping towards Buzzard's Bay on its route to Cape Cod, entered the town and completed the social revolution which for several years had been in progress. It wrought great changes. It had already changed the face of the country by starting fires in the woods and turning streams from their channels. It now changed the home life of the people, weakened their religious habits, lowered the value of their farms, cre-

ated new wants, and brought in a population of alien blood and faith. The influences of manufacturing and commercial affairs dominated the town meetings. A stress and hurry of life began ; and that peace of mind with time to look about, which was characteristic of a farming community in colonial times, disappeared never to return.

The farmers, who had been contented with the world bounded by their town's horizon, and with labors which produced such wealth as they required, found it difficult to conform their slow-going habits and inherited opinions to the new conditions surrounding them ; and, being no longer lords of the manor, they lost the independence which they had always enjoyed.

Now the farmer who is tilling the exhausted soil pieces out his scanty income by trifles derived from a mechanical trade. His sons work in the iron mills, the nail factories, on the cranberry bogs, on the oyster beds, or they go to sea. Some, seeking a better destiny, wander away to the great city and to the far West, where a successful career leads them to forget the old homestead, or misfortune compels them to return at last and seek the shelter of its roof.

Others, who are nearing old age and who delight to recall the incidents of their early days in Wareham, are sometimes drawn back to gather up the ancient household relics —

"The varnish'd clock that click'd behind the door,"

the three-cornered arm-chairs, the brass warming-pan that drove the cold out of feather beds in winter, the spinning-wheel, the grandmother's sampler wrought in strange devices, — and to re-light their fire on their paternal hearthstone.

APPENDIX.

THE following names are of persons upon whom a tax was imposed by the Selectmen of Wareham, in 1783 and 1784, to raise the money necessary to pay the cost of a two story dwelling-house, as described on page 154, which had been built for Mr. Noble Everitt, the town's minister. These names have been copied from the lists which were committed to the tax collector, and they probably represent nearly all the families living in Wareham at that time:—

Abigail Atwood.
Barnabas Atwood.
Joseph Atwood.
William Atwood.

Rose Barlow.
Isaac Barrows.
Nathan Bassett.
Alexander Bates.
Capt. Barnabas Bates.
Barnabas Bates, 3d.
John Bates.
Capt. Joseph Bates.
Samuel Bates.
Thomas Bates.
Thomas Bates, 2d.
David Besse, Jr.
Jabez Besse.
Jabez Besse, 2d.
John Besse.
Joshua Besse.
Silas Besse.
Thomas Besse.

Benjamin Benson.
Caleb Benson.
Consider Benson.
Ichabod Benson.
Jabez Benson.
John Benson.
Dea. William Blackmer.
Isaac Boles, Jr.
John Boles.
William Boles.
Joseph Bosworth.
Benjamin Bourn.
Ebenezer Bourn.
Noah Bourn.
Stephen Bourn.
Benjamin Briggs, S. c. (ship carpenter).
Benjamin Briggs.
Ebenezer Briggs.
Hallet Briggs.
Jesse Briggs.
Joseph Briggs.
Joshua Briggs.

Nathan Briggs.
Perez Briggs.
Samuel Briggs.
Seth Briggs.
Barnabas Bumpus.
Edward Bumpus.
Jeremiah Bumpus.
Lieut. Jeremiah Bumpus.
John Bumpus.
Joseph Bumpus, 2d.
Widow Mary Bumpus.
Noah Bumpus.
Samuel Bumpus.
Sylvester Bumpus.
Elisha Burgess.
James Burgess.
Lieut. Prince Burgess.

Jonathan Church.
Nathaniel Cleark.
Willard Cleark.
William Conant.
Joshua Crocker.

William Estes.

Benjamin Fearing.
David Fearing.
Israel Fearing.
Israel Fearing, 2d.
John Fearing, Esquire.
Noah Fearing, Esquire.
Silas Fearing.

Benjamin Gibbs.
Jonathan Gibbs.
Capt. John Gibbs, Jr.
Joseph Gibbs.
Capt. Joseph Gibbs.
Joshua Gibbs.
Capt. Joshua Gibbs.
John Gollt.

Aaron Hammond.
Edward Hammond.

Widow Anna Haskell.
David Haskell.
Timothy Haskell.
Arthur Hathaway.
David Hathaway.
Henry Hathaway.
Nathan Hathaway.
Salathiel Hathaway.
Simon Hathaway.
Henry Hedley.
Seth Hiller.
Calvin Howard.
Enos Howard.

Capt. John Kendrick.

John LeBaron.
James LeBaron heirs.
Thomas Lothrop, Plymo.

Doct. Andrew Mackie.
Caleb Mendol.
Nubery Morse.
Zebulon Morse.
Benjamin Morey.
Bartlett Murdock.
David Muxham.
Ezra Muxham.
Nathan Muxham.
Rubin Muxham.

Oliver Norris.
Samuel Norris.
Capt. David Nye.
Jabez Nye.

Ebenezer Parker.
David Perry.
David Perry, Junr.

Ichabod Sampson, Junr.
David Sanders.
Henry Sanders.
Joseph Sanders.
Isaac Savery.

Phinehas Savery.
Samuel Savery.
Lt. Samuel Savery.
Thomas Savery.
Richard Sears.
Nathan Shaw, Junr.
Benjamin Shurtlif.
Francis Shurtlif.
Edward Sparrow.
Capt. Josiah Stevens.
Seth Stevens.
Andrew Sturtevant.
Charles Sturtevant.
Ephraim Sturtevant.
Hermon Sturtevant.
Joseph Sturtevant.
Rowland Sturtevant.
Asa Swift.
Benjamin Swift.
Elisha Swift.
Enoch Swift.
Enoch Swift, Junr.
Jesse Swift.
Jesse Swift, 2d.
Josiah Swift.
Lemuel Swift.
Samuel Swift.
Samuel Swift, Junr.

Lot Thacher.
Rowland Thacher.
Samuel Trip.

William Washburn.
Edward White.
Nathaniel White.
Richard Whitmore.
Butler Wing.
Jedediah Wing.
John Wing.
John Winslow.
Tisdel Winslow.
Seth Witherell.

Henry Young.

Of these persons some were taxed as owners of vessels, — as Capt. John Kendrick, Capt. Joseph Bates, Capt. Joseph Gibbs, Nathan Bassett, Asa Swift, Jesse Swift, 2d, and many others. Captain Kendrick, the discoverer of Columbia River, is mentioned on page 194. Nathan Bassett was the village blacksmith, who probably became an owner in vessels by forging iron work for them. The town records mention his employment to forge bayonets for the town's six muskets, when news of the Battle of Bunker Hill reached Wareham. Asa Swift was a ship-builder, and was building ships at the Narrows village as late as the year 1811. Nearly all the Swifts and Besses on the tax collector's list were ship carpenters, ship masters, or connected in some way with ships.

Some persons were taxed as owners of factories, —

Perez Briggs, Joseph Bumpus, 2d, Nathan Bassett, Benjamin Fearing, Josiah Crocker, Enos Howard, Dr. Andrew Mackie, Enoch Swift, Lemuel Swift, Richard Whitmore, Henry Young, and others. It is difficult to understand what was meant by "factories." There were small fulling mills, grist mills, and saw mills on the banks of the three rivers that empty into Buzzard's Bay within the town limits; but there was nothing that could be classed as a factory, in the modern meaning of the word, except several structures on the bay shore in which salt was made by the evaporation of sea water, and an iron forge at Tihonet, erected soon after the Revolutionary War, by Samuel Leonard of Taunton.

In later years the water power of the three rivers began to attract the notice of manufacturers in other parts of the state. In 1812, when cotton spinning by machinery was in its infancy, Jonathan Read of Taunton came to Wareham and built a cotton factory on the Woonkinco River. This factory was set on fire by the British raiders of 1814.

In 1815, Curtis Tobey came from Sandwich and built a factory for cotton yarns, wickings, and shirtings, on the Weweantet River, near Fearing Hill, "with 144 good cast-steel spindles." In 1826, this mill, which was neatly built of stone, was leased to Bartlett Murdock, who came from Carver, and Joshua B. Tobey, at $350 a year. In 1823, a mill for cotton cloths was built by Benjamin Lincoln, who came from Norton, and Curtis Tobey, on the Weweantet River, near Bump's bridge. It started with 420 spindles, and employed two men, one boy, and seven girls.

There were iron works in the town before the Tihonet Forge was built. Surveys of land made in 1739 mention "Brigg's Iron Works on the Weweantet River;" these

stood on the present site of the Tremont Iron Works. In 1821, Isaac and Jared Pratt, who came from Middleboro, established the manufacture of nails by machinery on the Woonkinco River, at the dam, where the first cotton mill was built. In 1826, a rolling mill and a nail factory were erected at "The Poles" on the Weweantet River by George Howland, who came from New Bedford. In 1836, nail factories were built on the Agawame River by Samuel T. Tisdale, who came from Taunton, on the site where, in 1824, Thomas Savery built a cupola iron furnace.

In addition to these cotton and iron factories, a paper mill was started in 1824 by Pardon Tabor on the Weweantet, near County Bridge; and in 1829 a stave mill for nail kegs was started by Lewis Kinney farther up the river.

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